

**WEST HARTFORD TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
APRIL 10, 2014
LEGISLATIVE CHAMBER**

ITEM #1: MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: 8:18 P.M.

President Slifka: Okay. We're going call the meeting to order and begin with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM #2: PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Slifka: Okay. Ms. Hall and I are sharing the agenda at the moment. So we'll begin with roll call, please, Ms. Labrot?

ITEM #3: ROLL CALL

Present were Councilors Chris Barnes, Shari Cantor, Harry Captain, Leon Davidoff, Burke Doar, Denise Hall, Clare Kindall, and Scott Slifka. Judy Casperson was absent. Mr. Gordon sat in for Ms. Casperson.

President Slifka: Welcome, Mr. Gordon. Okay. We'll move to #4, Ms. Cantor?

ITEM #4: APPROVAL OF MINUTES: TOWN COUNCIL 3-11-14

Councilor Cantor: I move that we approve the minutes for town council, March 11, 2014.

Councilor Kindall: Second.

President Slifka: Motion is made and seconded. Any discussion? Seeing none, all those in favor?

All: Aye.

President Slifka: Those opposed? Motion carries. We're up to public forum.

ITEM #5: PUBLIC FORUM

President Slifka: Mr. O'Brien's already up.

Mr. O'Brien: No one signed up.

President Slifka: No one's signed up. Anybody not signed up who wishes to speak to an item that is on the agenda but was not otherwise the subject of a public hearing? Okay, seeing none, we move to report from the town manager.

ITEM #6: REPORT OF TOWN MANAGER

President Slifka: And we have a special guest as part of that so why don't we have the guest come up first and then we can proceed to the usual presentation by the manager. Welcome to Bruce Putterman, chair of the board of education. We invited Mr. Putterman to be here as part of the budget dialogue. We hoped to get him here at an earlier date – go wherever you'd like, Bruce – and unfortunately, those who watched us, the rampant zoning hearings and our not starting council meetings until – I think on an average, about 10:30 at night – prevented us from getting Mr. Putterman here at a timely hour when the council would also probably still be awake enough to ask questions. So we were able to do it tonight – thankfully get him in at a pretty decent hour. So, Bruce, thank you for being here. I also thank you for inviting me to be before the board recently and we'll just turn it over to you and I'll just say at the beginning that I know he'll make the offer but Bruce will be happy to answer questions for the council as we have had in past years. So welcome, Bruce.

Mr. Putterman: Great. Thanks, Mr. Mayor. I was feeling guilty that I kept you waiting a half hour at – when you came to our meeting but I feel no more guilt. Right. Thank you for inviting me. I think it's a great tradition that we've established recently – enhanced board-council collaboration as evidenced by your consistent attendance now at our meetings and your consistent invitation to have me attend your meetings. And I hope that this practice can continue well into the future. So the budget that we passed on Tuesday represents the culmination of an exhaustive process, as exhaustive as your process. We discussed our budget at three regular meetings. We had three workshops on our budget, after which we had – or were able to have further discussion. We had a public hearing. We had input from parents at 12 of our schools, 12 of our 16 schools. For those of you who attended one or more of those hearings – one or more of those input meetings, thank you. We invited all board members to submit questions to the superintendent at the beginning of our process on March 4th. We made an explicit invitation again on March 12th. In the end, after robust discussion, I am thrilled to report that there was unanimous, bipartisan agreement on 145,759,757 dollars' worth of spending. There was disagreement on 129,000 dollars' worth of spending – two items. To put it another way, democrats and republicans agree on literally 99.9% of our budget and disagree on 0.1% of the budget. This budget that we passed on Tuesday is essentially last year's budget rolled forward. We made some additions – minor additions for mental health, security, classroom-based teaching assistants, and a few other items that represent 0.3% of the budget, or 420,000 dollars. Overall, we're asking the council for a 4.16% increase in our budget. That breaks down as follows. Teacher salaries: 1.41%; additional healthcare costs: 2.02%; increases in pension contribution which you all dictate to us: 0.31%; new positions: 0.26%; and all other items: 0.16% – for again, a total of 4.16% increase. If we took healthcare costs out of that calculus, then we'd be asking for a 2.14% increase and even if we only took half of the healthcare costs out of that calculus, we'd still only be asking for a 3.15%. And I say that – I offer that just to kind of dramatize the impact of the healthcare costs in this year's budget increase. So clearly, healthcare and teacher salaries are what are driving the budget. The teacher salaries, of course, are driven by negotiated contracts which, as I remember, the last contract that was ratified about 16 months

ago was unanimously praised by the council for being a very, very fair settlement. Nondiscretionary items, like healthcare, salary increases, and pension contributions, equal about 90% of our requested increase. The handful of discretionary items represents about 10% of our requested increase. So we come before you tonight – or I come before you tonight to ask for your support for a budget that doesn't really break any new ground. It does, however, sustain the excellence that we expect from our school system and that have been the hallmark of our school system and our town for many years. We believe it's a responsible and efficient budget and we believe it aligns with the needs and the values of the students and parents and teachers and taxpayers of West Hartford. And so with that, I am happy to answer any questions that you might have.

President Slifka: Okay, who has questions for Mr. Putterman? Mrs. Cantor, go ahead.

Councilor Cantor: I'm gonna just start with what we heard in public hearing. There were several people that spoke about a decreasing school enrollment but increasing costs. And in addition to teacher salaries, maybe you can just break down what those costs are, why costs are going up even though the student population numbers may be down.

Mr. Putterman: Just to kind of reiterate some of what I just said – so the healthcare costs are largely unrelated to enrollment with the same basic number of teachers. Well, let me back up. Let me back up. So the issue with declining enrollment is that the enrollment doesn't all decline in one school or in a handful of schools. If it did, that would be easy. If the enrollment were to decline by ten kids in one grade, at one school, well, that's easy. We could probably eliminate a teaching position. The challenge is, of course, that the decline in enrollment, roughly 80 students, is spread out across all grade levels. So we have two or three or four students per grade, per school decline. And those declines are not enough to be able to reduce the number of classrooms. So that's, in essence, what the issue is. The expectation is that as we go forward and we continue to experience further declines, that at some point relatively soon, we will, in fact, hit a critical mass whereby we can eliminate a team at the middle schools or we can eliminate a section at various elementary schools. We're just not there yet. We're on the path toward that but we're not there yet.

President Slifka: Thank you, Mrs. Cantor. Mrs. Hall?

Councilor Hall: Thank you for joining us tonight and giving us this opportunity. I appreciate it. With healthcare being the big driver, could you tell me how many of the bargaining units under the board of ed heading have adopted a high-deductible healthcare plan along with health savings accounts?

Mr. Putterman: So the real issue there is have the teachers adopted – because the teachers are by far our largest unit. The administrators are our second largest unit. So there is an HSA that's offered to teachers. Not as many teachers took the HSA, high-deductible plan, as we would like. Mr. Moore, in fact, who is our incoming superintendent, has made a very conscious and public

effort at letting people know that he, in fact, does take the HSA plan, even though it's, in his mind, not necessarily that right for his family. But he takes the plan to try to model that kind of behavior for others in the district. There are indications in other towns in Connecticut that districts are moving toward 100% HSA plans. New Fairfield, in fact, recently adopted a 100% high-deductible plan. So we don't know whether that's coming here in the next contract negotiation but it's certainly going to be here at some point relatively soon.

Councilor Hall: So is the teachers' contract, as it stands now with their benefits, would it be subject to the luxury tax or whatever under the Obama healthcare law?

Mr. Putterman: So you're getting above my pay grade in terms of the exact requirements of ObamaCare. I know that there has been some discussion as to whether our plan, as a public sector plan or just in general, qualifies as a Cadillac plan and is subject to a tax. I don't know the answer to that off the top of my head. I'd be happy to get you that answer.

Councilor Hall: Okay. Thank you. And then I just have a question...

Mr. Putterman: Or, by the way – I mean – or could defer to the town manager if he knows the answer.

Mr. Van Winkle: Thank you, Mr. Putterman.

Mr. Van Winkle: First of all, this tax that potentially could occur occurs in 2017. So it's some years away and as we've seen with a number of things in the affordable care act, there have been some adjustments and postponements on things that are going on. And as we negotiated some of the recent contracts we just approved, with the fire union, we moved all of our firefighters to an HSA that was – gave us some certainty that we weren't going to be able to get hit by that tax. I think the board program is voluntary. You can choose to be an HSA or not. The goal would be to strengthen that in the future as we have future negotiations. Whether we'll be hit by that tax, it gets close to the numbers that we're talking about if we project it out. But again, it's a little early for us to tell. We have some negotiations yet to go before we get to 2017, on the school side in particular, and on the town side. So I think we'll see where we go with that.

Councilor Hall: I think mostly the question is if it were to be – I realize the tax would hit in 2017 but it's indicative of the level of benefits that they have now so there's definitely room to move if that's where we're going. In terms of getting a greater adoption, since the contract doesn't require it, are you planning the healthcare fairs or any of the different ways that a lot of corporations have really rolled out the education on how this works and are we really trying to get everybody to adopt it through the use of different education? Can you tell me what you're doing there?

Mr. Putterman: I can tell you that we are trying to encourage people to adopt the HSA plan or option as reasonably aggressively – I couldn't tell you the details of how we're executing that.

Councilor Hall: Okay. And then, if you don't mind, it's sort of off the budget but just a question as we're looking at Charter Oak and potential future costs as that new school is built and it looks like right now, we've got a round building, a round design. Has that been finalized? Is that something that you – that's been adopted or is there still an opportunity to look at different designs? And if we have finalized this round building, do you know what the efficiency ratio is for that?

Mr. Putterman: The round design is – yes, that's finalized. I mean architectural drawings or designs are being developed as we speak related to that design. That design was one of three designs that was presented to the community last fall. It was the overwhelming favorite of most of the people who attended the various public meetings we had regarding the design. The teachers at Charter Oak are overwhelmingly in favor of that particular design. In fact, I'm not aware of a single teacher who objects to that design and I'm only aware of one Charter Oak employee who objects to the design. In terms of efficiency ratio, do you mean in terms of utility consumption?

Councilor Hall: Efficiency ratio is more – it's a technical term that is based upon the square footage of the building and then how much of that square footage is useable. And my concern is that we're building a school that is already inefficient in terms of our use of the space, our ability to adapt the space for different uses in the future. Typically what happens is when you're looking at a building, you're looking at building it but not necessarily the ongoing costs. So I'm concerned about all of the costs that will come along with this school going forward and by adopting a very nonstandard design, are we adding future costs to maintenance, upkeep, limiting our ability to either add on or close off parts of the school if we wanted to. And while I think it's a great idea to gain all of the opinions of teachers and neighbors and everybody else, I think it's of paramount importance to make sure we're doing the thing that's most cost effective in town. And so I am concerned about the efficiency ratio and I would think the architect should have that. I know a lot of schools that are being built that are being built by towns that are cost conscious, are looking at 90% efficiency ratios. Maybe 75 to 85 is probably more in the norm but we've got a lot of costs ahead of us in this town. We looked at that asset-liability study that showed our annual required contribution is going to go up to 33 million over the next 20 years. And so I think everything that we do, especially building a new building, which we know out of the gate we're going to have increased busing costs, as people come from across town. It's even more important that we look at those costs. So I guess I would like to get some answers as to that and whether we can analyze it with the town manager and if it's not too late, if the costs are higher than a traditional square building, if we can't rethink it.

Mr. Putterman: So we are – as you know, eligible construction costs are qualified for 80% state reimbursement. And we are very, very committed to maximizing how much of the square footage of that building is, in fact, eligible for that 80% reimbursement. That's how we sold the whole concept of the new school to the community. So given that, we are, by extension, similarly committed to any state standards that exist relative to useable space. The architects are

highly cognizant of that. I don't know exactly what the efficiency ratio is but I do know that conceptually, everybody understands that it has to meet benchmarks and standards in order to be able to qualify for the reimbursement. If the question is partially about the courtyard, which I've heard in other contexts, there have been concerns about the usability of that space and, I guess more specifically, the fact that a courtyard somehow precludes or minimizes the amount of public space that otherwise exists on the property. We see – and this actually speaks directly to your question about efficiency ratio – we see that courtyard as additional instructional space that doesn't count against the 86,000 square feet of space that we committed to and that we are designing to and that you all will see as the square footage of the design when you do see it. So that courtyard can be used for science projects, for gardens, and for food awareness, and for an amphitheater. So it represents useable space above and beyond the 86,000 square feet that we have. In terms of the operating costs, I think we kind of went through that last year. There will, as you point out, be additional operating costs. There are some programmatic features that we are planning on putting in at Charter Oak that will drive some increase in operating costs, however, because we are, by necessity, staggering the enrollment in the school, we're not gonna be able to open up a school with K to 5, or pre-K to 5, fully populated. We start with early grades and then over the years, fill out the entire school. Which means that there's not going to be kind of one overall hit to the budget when the school opens in 2016. That means we will have a gradual increase in operating costs until we get to kind of fully operational six years after opening – so by 2021. In terms of the adaptability, one feature of Charter Oak that we are particularly excited about is the adaptability in terms of usability of certain spaces by the community. So the gymnasium and the auditorium are going to be accessible to the community. And the vision is to be able to use those facilities beyond the traditional school hours. The gymnasium is being built to be able to be a state-of-the-art gym that can accommodate some of the basketball programs in town. The auditorium can be a central place where people in the community can gather for any number of cultural events. And so besides the educational value of those facilities, we're excited about the level of vibrancy that it brings to – or additional vibrancy that it brings to that neighborhood, as well. In terms of shutting down spaces or adaptability to close off spaces, we're not expecting that we need to be able to do that. But like any school, there are sections of classrooms and God forbid, if need be 50 years from now, we need to cordon off a hallway, that could be done the same way in the round school as it could be done in a square school but no one's anticipating that that's going to be necessary.

Councilor Hall: Okay, thank you. I appreciate your answers.

Mr. Putterman: Thank you.

President Slifka: Are there other questions? Mr. Captain?

Councilor Captain: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. I just wanted to add to sort of the conversation – although I'm not really up for redebating the building itself, the new Charter Oak School, I do want to add, I was with, I think, the mayor one night at Charter Oak and that was one of the questions I brought up was the efficiency as a building. And at the time, the architect said that

they have – designs today can make the buildings extremely more efficient than they were in the past. But the one thing I did want to throw in about the round building that I learned recently in public safety is that the round building concept is safer for our students in that, God forbid, in the event of a shooter, you don't have straight hallways for targets. As the building curves, there is less risk around the building. So it was a point that I never heard of before and when I heard it from Chief Gove, I appreciated that concept. So thank you.

President Slifka: Thank you. Mr. Doar?

Councilor Doar: Thank you, Mr. Mayor and thank you, Mr. Captain, for bringing up that point. I was also in the public safety meeting with Mr. Captain and I wanted to talk to you about that issue for a moment, if I may. Thank you very much, Mr. Putterman, for coming tonight and speaking with us. I assume that when the design of this school was contemplated, the safety of the students was certainly taken into consideration and you can just first answer that for me and just reaffirm for me that that was the case.

Mr. Putterman: By all means. In fact, my recollection is that the police department, and Chief Gove in particular, were highly involved in discussions regarding design.

Councilor Doar: And I appreciate that. I know all the parents and taxpayers do. The only thing I would just – and I know Harry didn't – certainly we're both supportive of what we heard at public safety. There was also – Tracey Gove points out that there are some issues with round buildings, as well. Sightlines are a crucial issue in any police action and a round building does give some difficulty to sightlines. He also talked about that at our hearing. So I just point that out. I'm not stating whether or not one type of building is safer than the other. I'm just pointing out that I'm glad to see that we talked about public safety, as a member of the public safety committee, during the contemplation of what the design was. So I appreciate that. I do have a couple of other questions. I don't know if my other colleagues – okay. In the public hearing this evening, Paul Connery was here and he talked about operating expenses. And you said that roughly 90% of the school budget is nondiscretionary and roughly 10% of it is discretionary. I can appreciate the way you approach the budget but appreciate – if you could address Mr. Connery's question about the school's operating expenses on a yearly basis and whether or not they've increased in excess of 3% and if they have, what is the percentage of operating expenses over the prior fiscal year? Mr. Putterman, and I want to say if by any chance, the questions I ask you, you don't have at your fingertips cause I certainly could appreciate – no problem. And if you could just get me the answers at some point in the not-too-distant future, I would certainly appreciate it and share it with all my colleagues.

Mr. Putterman: So I just want to clarify what I had meant to say – maybe I didn't say it clearly – was that in terms of the additional spending or request for additional spending, 90% of it was nondiscretionary – healthcare, salaries – and I'm considering salaries nondiscretionary – their contracted – pension contribution – and 10% of the increase was discretionary. That's not to say that overall, 90% of the budget is discretionary, 10% of the budget is nondiscretionary. 86% of

our budget are human beings. If we wanted to have the stomach to increase class size, for example, we could not fill teaching positions by attrition. So at some level, depending on how you define discretionary and nondiscretionary, nothing is purely nondiscretionary. But in the short term, they are. I didn't hear Mr. Connery's question. I wasn't here.

Councilor Doar: I can restate it for you. He said that – he raised a – how do I say this? He made a comment about that his concern that a budget – and this not just for the board of education budget but for the entire town, on that increase, its operating expenses in excess of 3% and he was using that, in some way, I think, in light of the inflation rate. He thought it was something we should explore and examine and be satisfied that that increase over that 3% threshold was necessary and prudent given the economic conditions of West Hartford.

Mr. Putterman: Yeah, so – yes, the increase in spending that we're looking for, that we're asking for is 4.16%. So, yes, it's over 3%. Healthcare is the main driver of that. That's roughly half of that increase. So whether we consider healthcare to be operating expenses for the purpose of this conversation or not, I guess that's something we can agree to define however we agree to define it. As I said before, if we took even half of the healthcare expense out, we're roughly at 3%. Another way that I have at least been looking at it is last year, our spending increase was 0.9%. So if we average out over two years, the 4.16 and the 0.9, we get to roughly 5% – 2-1/2 per year, that's well under Mr. Connery's 3% threshold. In the future, things like HSA, more aggressive movement toward less costly, less volatile healthcare expenditures should help that. But yeah, for the current year, we are, in fact, asking for 4.16% increase. And again, that's just to basically maintain current services. There's very little – 420,000 dollars' worth of incremental spending above and beyond what's required to kind of roll this budget forward.

Councilor Doar: Okay, I appreciate that. Another speaker at the public hearing, George Kennedy, actually raised an interesting – and I want to think about it some more and research it. He was talking about the property tax which, of course, is on everybody's mind here in April. And he said that it was never really designed to support this size of a budget. I think his exact words were this type of budget. I got thinking about that as he was speaking because it's my understanding from researching property taxes, it's been generally tax – the levy used to support public education across the United States. So I wasn't sure whether or not I really agreed with him yet but I wanted to ask you question about George's policy point in the context of given the high cost of public education and the commitment on the part of, I think, really the vast majority of the American people to do something about improving the educational standards of students all across the country. And particularly here in Connecticut, the need to really address and get better at reducing the achievement gap between those students who are affluent and those students who are less affluent. Can you share with me tonight what is the current amount that the educational cost sharing that we get from the state is for West Hartford and what should it be under the current formula?

Mr. Putterman: Well, you all actually are the people who take that revenue onto your budget. We don't deal with ECS in our budget. In fact, when it became clear recently that Senator Bye

had – was able to bring an additional 500,000 dollars in ECS funding to West Hartford for next year – she’s planning on inserting that in the budget at the legislature. That didn’t come up at our meeting at all, other than my kind of incidentally indicating that because we don’t deal in revenues other than in some very kind of minor areas related to facility rental, and musical instrument rental and some tuition related to summer school. My understanding, and Mr. Van Winkle, you probably have these numbers right there. My understanding is that if we were getting funded at the level that we should be funded at, that we would have an extra 41 to 45 million dollars in revenue to the town through ECS – through the ECS formula.

Councilor Doar: I am aware of the way the budget works and appreciate you making sure I understood it. I am aware of it but I also wondered to myself did you, as the chairman of the board of education, do anything – did you write any letters to our state officials over the last 12 months really urging our state representatives to do something on behalf of the students in West Hartford? Because the ECS funding, if we got the amount of money that should be allocated to the Town of West Hartford under the formula, the town wouldn’t be proposing the current budget we currently have which is gonna call for an additional tax increase this year, as well, if it passes. Did you or any members of your board write and have any letters that are public to our state officials about this situation involving – and I go to it regarding – back to Mr. Kennedy’s question because it’s an interesting question in light of what entity, whether or not it’s the federal government or the state government or the municipal governments? I’m only at the municipal level. Who bears the burden of educating public students and developing an educational system second to none in the world? And the vast brunt of it now is heavily on municipalities from the way I see it. And so I’m just wondering what your body did to address that issue for the Town of West Hartford.

Mr. Putterman: We’re in regular contact with all of our legislators and not a single interaction with them goes by without us mentioning ECS. We also, however, other – so there are more opportunities for maximizing revenue back to the town than ECS that perhaps are easier and less challenging to effectuate, one of which is the excess cost sharing grant. So the way excess cost sharing works is that any cost for special education that are above four-and-a-half times the average cost per pupil – so in the current year, any cost for special education above 58,000 dollars is subject to 100% reimbursement from the state. The state hasn’t historically reimbursed it 100% and that reimbursement has been slipping and slipping and slipping down to the point where we would expect them to be about 65% for the coming year. And we have made that aspect of the shortfall in revenue to our town clear to our legislators, as well. And, in fact, that piece of the revenue side of the equation has, in fact, been addressed and our expectation is that reimbursement’s gonna be somewhere in the 75 to 80% range. So it’s not back up to 100 but it’s – we bent the curve, as I said. So yes, we address ECS, we attend legislative days on the hill, we have dinner with our legislators, we talk to them, we text them, we email them. We are in constant touch with them. They are painfully aware of the fact that we are – as I understand it – the second lowest reimbursed town in terms of ECS after Waterbury, I believe. And frankly, I think that was the impetus for Senator Bye trying pretty aggressively to at least get us something back on ECS.

Councilor Doar: I appreciate that and just to – for the sake of demonstrating fairness, I certainly am appreciative of West Hartford getting the grant to build Charter Oak, to fund the construction of a new school in West Hartford to the tune of 80% of construction funds. That wouldn't have happened if we hadn't had Senator Bye working on that, on our behalf, for the children of West Hartford and any other children that may take advantage of that school from surrounding communities. But as long as I'm on the subject of Charter Oak, what is the current estimated cost for the construction of Charter Oak as we sit today?

Mr. Putterman: We are, as I understand it, on budget and we are at the 86,000 square feet that we committed to before the design process began. So...

Councilor Doar: No, but what's the actual number?

Mr. Putterman: The actual number – 45 million dollars, I believe, is the...

Mr. Van Winkle: The construction cost is about 40 million. The 45 million is the total cost: the design, the purchase of furniture and equipment, all the other things that go into a school. The actual construction cost is about 40 million which is within the numbers we're looking at.

Councilor Kindall: If I could ask a follow-up – so this is gonna be – this isn't going to be a regional Magnet, right? This is for the children of West Hartford?

Mr. Putterman: That's correct.

Councilor Kindall: So we aren't talking about making this regional Magnet for all the other surrounding towns. This is solely West Hartford kids, correct?

Mr. Putterman: Yes.

Councilor Kindall: Okay. Thank you.

Councilor Doar: You said that one of the attractive features of this new school would be that the gymnasium will also be able to be used for the town and for our youth basketball. As you may know, Mr. Putterman, I'm an avid basketball person and a coach of the youth basketball league. I practice twice a week during the year in, one night in Charter Oak, in the current gym. What did you mean by that because as of this last year, the schools are available for youth basketball to use their gyms. It's quite a complicated schedule but, in fact, we have dozens of teams and we practice twice a week. So I'm not sure I understood what you meant by that.

Mr. Putterman: I guess what I meant was it will ultimately be a nicer, newer, more spacious facility. It will be a more pleasant environment for our kids to participate in sports, for our parents to participate in cheering on their children in sports. Sure, we could – we don't – we're

not building a new school for the sake of having a better gym but while we're building a new school, we are creating a better gym.

Councilor Doar: Well, it's nice to see it's a better gym. I just – I knew that you weren't trying to suggest that currently, we're not using our public school gyms for our youth programs because Helen Turco and the people in leisure services work very hard to make that happen for the benefit, again, of our students. The budget is 40 million. Bruce, again, Mr. Putterman, Bruce, I know – I don't know how formal you want to be but you don't happen to know what the budget was – the final number for the construction of Bristow Middle School, do you?

Mr. Putterman: 23, 25 million dollars? 25. Standard deviation.

Councilor Doar: And I'm sorry, again, I'm taxing your memory or maybe Mr. Van Winkle's. What was the square footage?

Mr. Putterman: That I don't know.

Councilor Doar: I'm trying – obviously trying to...

President Slifka: When I invited Mr. Putterman, I told him there would be no math.

Councilor Doar: I know. And I appreciate that, Mr. Mayor. And I'm sorry, Mr. Putterman, but we don't get a chance to see each other very often. And so I won't – as I said, if you don't know the answer, please don't hesitate to say I don't know, I have to find out.

Mr. Putterman: No, I don't.

Mr. Van Winkle: If you're trying to get at a cost per square foot, this school is much more expensive per square foot. The school is dramatically different than just when we built Bristow a few years ago. The child safety issues going into this school are dramatically different than we have in any of our schools because of recent incidents. This school will have a green heating system. There'll be no air conditioner or boiler in this school but it will be air conditioned and have a boiler by using a geothermal system. Those are more expensive but because of the opportunity to install something like that which would save us on the utility costs substantially, and 80% of those costs will be paid for by the State of Connecticut. So there's a number of things in this school which we didn't consider at Bristow and because the state is funding a portion of it, we have the opportunity to take advantage of that.

Councilor Kindall: Ron, how much – what percent – how much of the Charter Oak School is in this year's budget? For the issue that we're talking about now, how much of it – how much of Charter Oak is currently in the budget that we'll be voting on this month?

Mr. Van Winkle: None.

Councilor Kindall: None?

Mr. Van Winkle: None.

Councilor Kindall: Zero?

Mr. Van Winkle: You've already approved this funding for this project.

Councilor Kindall: So it's all been CIP?

Mr. Van Winkle: Yes.

Councilor Kindall: So there's nothing on Charter Oak in this budget?

Mr. Van Winkle: That's correct.

Councilor Kindall: Thank you.

Councilor Doar: Clare, that's interesting and I know we're not here to have a debate tonight and I appreciate the mayor's indulgence in letting me use this time of the meeting to ask some questions of our distinguished guest. The only reason I bring it up is that we know about debt service. Sooner or later – we just had a meeting on Blue Back Square. Blue Back Square also cost the town and the raising an issuance of bonds to the tune of about 40 million dollars. Someday, they'll be – some taxpayers will have to pay for this school and I was just curious about that.

Councilor Kindall: And I appreciate that.

President Slifka: Hold on, hold on, hold on. I run this pretty informally but this is getting out of hand so I'd appreciate it if you'd at least acknowledge that the chair exists and allow me to run this stuff through you. So Burke has the floor. Mrs. Kindall, if you'd like to – if you'd like the floor, please ask me.

Councilor Doar: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. I won't belabor it anymore. Bruce, again, thank you very much for coming. This is obviously a serious time in the year and I'm working hard to understand the budget, both on the board of ed side and on the town side. I appreciate the hard work and the public service you commit to our students and it's good to see you here.

President Slifka: Thank you, Mr. Putterman. Did you have a question, Mrs. Kindall?

Councilor Kindall: My point simply is thank you very much for coming and for – obviously it bespeaks the desire to have communication but we really appreciate your courtesy and your facility with all the numbers, as well, for coming here to defend the budget. Thank you.

President Slifka: Mr. Davidoff?

Councilor Davidoff: Thank you, Mr. Putterman. I want to talk about two things. First, I'll get to the Charter Oak School, having been one of the councilor representatives to that committee meeting and I think I missed maybe one of several meetings. But I was there for most of them and I will concur that the consensus from the teacher population, the neighborhood population, the administration, and the board was the design that was selected. The architectural firm, I thought, was outstanding in terms of – this wasn't a rookie project. They've been around the block. They design schools as a major part of their design portfolio. And what really struck me was the involvement of our incoming superintendent, Tom Moore, who really spent a lot of time with our public safety officials with respect to the issue of safety. And that issue was paramount to the design and I'm certain it will be executed that way. The exact question that Minority Hall raised with respect to the use of space in the building was raised during one of the meetings and the architectural firm, to my recollection, answered it quite well, saying that yes, every space in this building has been designed for a specific purpose, to be utilized for a specific purpose and we know what those purposes are going into it. We're not just designing spaces with the hope of one day we're going to use them. So I just want to make certain that that's on the record and that was brought up in the discussion. Now, I think the purpose you came this evening was to enlighten us as to the actions that the board of education took with respect to the budget which we will be adopting a town budget in about two weeks. As a participant in one of the PTO forums at Wolcott School, I had the pleasure of being in the company of about 30 Wolcott parents as well as board member, Mr. Sarzen. After hearing a lot of interesting PTO presentations, Mr. Sarzen presented, for the group, the board's budget and, in my opinion, did a very thorough job explaining how the budget just basically rolled forward, explained the healthcare costs, the drivers, the constraints on the budget. And probably spoke between, I don't know, anywhere between 25 and 35 minutes, leaving myself about three minutes to speak to the crowd before the meeting adjourned. And basically, I was telling people we're looking at development opportunities so that the town can have additional revenue to offset any type of increases we might be seeing in expenditures. So I was giving basically the town view. So when I read the newspaper Wednesday morning, I was really surprised to read that the budget was decided on partisan lines, 5-2, and this evening, you started off saying that the differences between the two parties and the members of the parties was about 129,000 dollars. So which brings me to my question that really has been bothering me. Were there any cuts or suggested cuts made by members of either party that were flushed out during budget deliberations that we as town councilors ought to know about with respect to things that some members thought were unnecessary or shouldn't be in the budget but just never came out?

Mr. Putterman: Yes. So I guess I have a two-part answer to that question. The first part is, the superintendent's proposed budget was 146,841,000 dollars which represented a 4.85% increase versus the current year. We cut, in a first pass, 952,000 dollars. Admittedly, most of that being a reduction in healthcare costs because the folks on the board side and the folks on the town manager's side worked together to rethink how we reflect healthcare costs. And you could probably be more articulate about exactly what you did from kind of an accounting and an

assumption point of view regarding projecting healthcare costs going forward based on history, based on smoothing out healthcare fund over five years, and that sort of thing. There were a handful of other cuts, as well, so those totaled 952,000 dollars. That got us down to 145,888,000 dollars which represents the 4.16% increase versus current budget. Our republican colleagues, on Tuesday morning, this past Tuesday morning, the morning of the budget vote, did, in fact, send me an email proposing really I guess more asking questions about but, in effect also, proposing potential reductions equal to 1.3 million dollars. So Tuesday evening, we went through every one of those items, line by line. Director salaries, department supervisor salaries, teaching assistant pay, substitute pay, security salaries, number of librarians, attendance coordinators, activities coordinators, behavioral specialists, one additional elementary full-time employee equivalent, why a teacher existed under the superintendent line item, a clinical supervisor for mental health, nurses. So we took every one of those individual items and had a discussion about each of those items. And as I experienced the meeting, our colleagues who had asked questions about those items were satisfied with the responses that they got from those items and when given the opportunity to suggest that they be included as reductions, demurred and chose not to include any of those items, except for the two items that totaled the 129,000 dollars, which is why I say that we were unanimous in supporting 145,700,000 dollars' worth of budget expenditures because there was no objection to any of the specific line item proposals, other than the two items that I mentioned.

President Slifka: Let him follow up and then we'll go back.

Councilor Barnes: Is that okay, Mr. Davidoff? Thank you. I just want to clarify for the record, my republican colleagues, Mr. Sarzen and Mr. Zydanowicz, they're both against the budget. That's correct, right?

Mr. Putterman: That is correct.

Councilor Barnes: Thank you.

President Slifka: Mr. Davidoff.

Councilor Davidoff: Okay. So I just want to make certain we're clear here. There was a memo sent Tuesday morning with proposed cuts to the board budget of over one million dollars – 1.1 million, I think? 1.3 million.

Mr. Putterman: 1,280,000 dollars.

Councilor Davidoff: 1,280,000. And there was a full discussion of each of these items around the board table. Is that correct?

Mr. Putterman: Yes.

Councilor Davidoff: The reason I'm asking this question is, as a town councilperson, I don't know all the ins and outs of every board program but I would presume that those who serve on the board of education who have, in my opinion, more superior knowledge and expertise with matters relating to board of education fiscal matters, would raise these questions. So I would presume that due diligence was undertaken to evaluate the different programs and expenditures, line items, that they could control. And it was felt by some members of the current board of education that 1,280,000 dollars' worth of cuts should be examined. And some – what I'm gathering here this evening, was there was really disagreement in the end, when the night was over, about 129,000 dollars after there was a full discourse. So people constantly ask me well, what are you going to do as a town councilor with respect to – are you going to offer some type of cut to the board of education's budget? And I just have to step back for a moment this evening and say well, they've already examined 1.28 million dollars, okay, and came up with 129,000. And these are supposed to be people who are in a better position to know their budget than I am. So I think that's important to get on the record because I think that was also brought up in the public discussion this evening with respect to the council's role. Obviously we could offer any dollar amount cut. But I think that's important in terms of the legislative history of the process as to what has already been examined and by whom. And that's my point so thank you for taking the opportunity to listen to me.

President Slifka: Thank you, Mr. Davidoff. I know others had follow-ups but I'm trying to hit those that haven't had a chance to ask anything yet. So Mr. Barnes, I'm gonna take your follow-up as not really having counted and I'll go to you for the first time.

Councilor Barnes: Mr. Mayor, so kind. Thank you. And Mr. Putterman, thank you again for being here and I'll take my opportunity to ask you some questions cause you may not come back. So while you're here – I believe you said that the board has a 4.16% increase in your budget. After the cuts that you talked about, that's the final number, correct? And of that increase, if you could, could you tell me what portion of those dollars are going into the classroom to benefit the students, either in the form of additional resources, computers, smart boards, programs, things of that sort to actually improve the education that our kids current receive here in town?

Mr. Putterman: So I don't mean to sound glib but I believe it all goes into the classroom in one form or another. So the healthcare increases that we're paying for our teachers, that goes into the classroom. Those are the human beings that are walking into our classrooms and teaching our kids. The additional half FTE, full-time equivalent, clinical supervisor that we added to be able to better supervise and conduct professional development and be available for consultation for mental health-related issues directly affects the classroom. Security guards which is one of our requested increases makes our students feel safer so they can be more attendant to learning in the classroom. The teachers' salaries clearly are – they're negotiated certainly but we need salaries to be able to attract high quality teachers, which, by the way, there are some misperceptions regarding the salary scale. And I may have this backwards but for first-year teachers, I believe we are 15th in Hartford County in terms of salaries that we offer and in terms of once you max out, so your highest potential salary, I believe we are tenth in Hartford County. So we exist in a

competitive marketplace for teachers and our ability to offer reasonable salaries is important. There are other things we offer, professional development being kind of the primary one, that does count for something – that does make up a little bit for the differential between being kind of the top salary offer versus the tenth. But we have to be very cognizant, I believe, of our ability to attract teachers partially through salaries. So I would argue that the contracted salary increases go into the classroom. So virtually everything that we have proposed goes in the classroom. The bus contracts – there's an escalator on the bus contract that's negotiated – 3% for regular buses, 4% for special ed buses. That's an inflation factor that's built into the contract. Does that go in the classroom? No, not directly but it's a service that we need to provide.

Councilor Barnes: Thank you. The statistic that you just mentioned about salary, does that include the entire benefits package or is that just looking at salaries:

Mr. Putterman: No, that's just salary.

Councilor Barnes: Just salary. So it doesn't include the other benefits in terms of how West Hartford would rank vis-à-vis the surrounding towns in terms of the higher benefits package provided to the teachers.

Mr. Putterman: Correct.

Councilor Barnes: Thank you. My understanding of the budget, of the board budget, I think in excess of 85% of the increase is for salaries, benefits, including pension, and healthcare. Is that correct?

Mr. Putterman: Yes. So out of the 4.16% increase, you've got 1.41% for salaries, 2.02% for health, 0.31% for pension. So what is that? That's 3.77% out of 4.16 for those three items.

Councilor Barnes: I guess the percentage then is slightly reduced because of the decrease – I guess maybe about 900,000 for the IBNR – the incurred but not reported yet – healthcare claims by using a 30-day review period as opposed to a 60-day period which is really just a gap depending on how the claims are gonna come in. So you're hoping that based upon a 30-day review, you've been to capture what the experience is gonna be like going forward.

Mr. Putterman: That is correct, although, it's also my understanding that that is kind of the standard practice and we had been out of compliance with standard practice for many years – or at least accepted practice.

Councilor Barnes: Thank you. One other question. One thing that's been in the news a lot lately is common core standards and the implementation of them, not only around the country but here in Connecticut. Can you tell me how much money, as part of this budget, has been spent on the implementation of the common core standards here in town?

Mr. Putterman: We are close to fully implementing common core. So there's – back up – just a little context. So every year, there's always some amount of curriculum development funded in our budget. We're always examining curriculum. We're always improving curriculum. So over the last several years, we have bumped up the curriculum development funding a little bit but using what we typically would have had in the budget to develop new curriculum that was in compliance with common core. So all curriculum development going forward will be to meet and align with the common core set of standards but it's also a curriculum development process that we go through perpetually as part of our contingency agreement...

Councilor Barnes: And – I'm sorry I didn't mean to interrupt. And as part of that, the town purchased computers for the testing requirement for the students. Has the town done training for the teachers to be able to implement this curriculum in the classroom – standards in the classrooms – the testing requirements that go along with it – this new set of testing requirements. I consider that all within the common core arena. Is there any way for you to put a percentage or a dollar amount on the amount of money that's been spent by the town implementing the common core standards?

Mr. Putterman: The common core standards – the training on the common core is part of our regular training program. So all of the common core training has taken place during our Wednesday CSIs, which are our professional development time for all of our teachers, as well as during our full-day professional development days: two days at the beginning of school, one day on election day. There has been a di minimis cost in terms of paying for substitutes to be in classrooms as teachers are pulled out occasionally during the school day to come together in collaboration to develop the common core standard. In terms of the testing – so one issue – one challenge that we're dealing with right now is that there's this conflation of three issues: common core, SBAC testing, and teacher evaluation. So I like to think of them really as separate but related issues. So the SBAC testing is, in fact, aligning from a timing perspective with the introduction of common core, although, in many other towns, they have not yet implemented common core but they are field testing SBAC this year and will be required to implement SBAC next year kind of regardless of where they are on common core. So in any event, just as a point of clarification, I see those as separate issues. To your point, your question about the technology that's required to implement SBAC, we, several years ago, Claire will remember this, commissioned a technology review and out of that review came kind of a whole brand-new strategic process for how to utilize technology which included reorganizing the organizational structure, developing new processes – Wi-Fi was the first step – you all approved the Wi-Fi – as well as capital purchases – computers. And so those – the computer acquisitions are part of a broader, long-term technology blueprint and are not being done specifically for SBAC. In terms of the specific number, I believe from a capital improvement perspective, we have recommended about 350,000 per year just as part of a technology refresh – ongoing, kind of perpetual evergreen type of refresh. And then some operating dollars related to technology, as well. I don't know the number off the top of my head. It's in our book, I can look for it after I'm done and either email that to you or whisper in your ear when we're done.

Councilor Barnes: I appreciate the detail. So it sounds like from your answer that there's been almost no cost incurred through the implementation. It's all been part of your budget and things that you would otherwise do in the normal course. And I think your word was de minimis – that there's been no dollars associated with the implementation. Is that accurate?

Mr. Putterman: No incremental – I would say there are no incremental dollars. No dollars other than the cost of substitutes and some small bump in the amount of summer curriculum development work. But yes, I would characterize it as de minimis.

Councilor Barnes: De minimis?

Mr. Putterman: Yup.

Councilor Barnes: Very good. Thank you.

President Slifka: Thank you, Mr. Barnes. I think Mr. Captain is on deck.

Councilor Captain: Thank you, Mr. Mayor, and thank you, Mr. Putterman for coming this evening. It's great to have you here. I and I think many of my colleagues rely on the work of the board because as Mr. Donahue pointed out – or Mr. Kennedy pointed out this evening, our only role is to pass a number to the board if we are to reduce their budget. So it is very important to me that we do not cut the board without very good input about the number that we're suggesting or that anybody suggests. So Mr. Davidoff's earlier questioning and the Hartford Courant – I'm going to watch your board meeting from Tuesday night because between what I learned about you reviewing 1.28 million dollars and what I read in the Courant, it sounds like the 1.28 million went down fairly quickly and a lot of time was spent on two items or 100 and – what was it? 129,000. And 129,000 dollars is a really low number in the scheme of your budget. In fact, it's less than 9/100 of 1%. So if you all spent your time doing that work and you got down to that level, I want to be very careful – very informed if any of my colleagues have suggestions to reduce the board budget. I would appreciate hearing them from you all more than the morning of our budget adoption night so that we can shake those numbers out and understand where people may be coming from so that we have good input for budget adoption night. So thank you for coming.

President Slifka: Okay, I think Mrs. Cantor we're up to?

Councilor Cantor: On the healthcare, I just wanted to mention that 1% of the total population are creating 90% of the claims. It's nine claims that were catastrophic. And I did participate in the teacher negotiations and Rick Ledwith worked very hard to try to get HSA for the whole population and it was rejected. And we did make significant progress on salary and it's always a tradeoff. So it would have pushed it arbitration and they felt that they would do that and try to encourage people to. But moving along, times have changed and we'll continue on that path to push for – encourage, I shouldn't say push – encourage and educate about the benefits of HSA.

President Slifka: Okay. Mrs. Hall, you've been waiting.

Councilor Hall: Thank you. I guess – I know I mentioned it at our last council meeting but I have been an HSA and high-deductible health plan person for years now. I love it. It's a great thing and if you ever do want to have a show and have any guests in, I'd be happy to speak on behalf of the high-deductible healthcare plan. And frankly, I didn't realize that we were only supposed to talk about the budget tonight cause I'm thinking if we only get one chance a year...

President Slifka: I didn't say that.

Councilor Hall: Okay.

President Slifka: Neither did Mr. Putterman.

Councilor Hall: Okay, good.

President Slifka: We did get rather deep into things further from the budget. I think it's just been...

Councilor Hall: I watched the meeting the other night so I figured this is our one formal chance to talk about the part of what we do that consumes the biggest part of the budget. So I guess I sort of wanted to follow up on the common core question. Just even the whole name of it sort of bothers me cause I feel like we came to West Hartford for schools because they were exceptional and now we're embracing common. And so I guess I – and when we have a teacher at Sedgwick who writes a letter to the editor that goes viral across the country, and really creates a whole lot of conversation amongst our residents, our schools, our teachers, our parents, I felt like this whole thing kind of came out of nowhere and all of a sudden, everybody's adopting it without that real discussion. And I guess I just want to know philosophically, how does the board feel about the common core? Are you happy? Do you feel like it was forced on you or are you happily embracing it?

Mr. Putterman: We don't feel like it was forced on us. We do embrace it. We believe that – or most of us believe that the standards represented by common core are better standards. We have always had standards in West Hartford that we teach to. And we always, as I said earlier in terms of our ongoing curriculum review, we are always evaluating those standards. All of our administration, I believe all of our board members to varying degrees embrace common core as a better set of standards, as a more aspirational set of standards than even the standards that we've been working with over the last however many years. Regarding the teacher at Sedgwick, this I guess is my point about the conflation of the three issues. My understanding is that that particular teacher didn't really object to common core per se. That the main objection was the testing and the teacher evaluation which tends to be the bigger objection amongst teachers in general. In fact, as I also alluded, 60 of our teachers from all across the district, all grade levels, have been involved in developing common core. The teachers are very – for the most part, very

excited about common core. To your point about we are not common, I agree with you. The analogy I like to use is this. It's like establishing the rules of football, right? Everybody has to play by the same overall set of rules. Everybody has to get the ball in the end zone or kick a field goal and you have a couple different ways of advancing the ball. One is through running, one is through passing. But then every team has different plays for how they run, for how they pass. And so common core represents the get the ball in the end zone, kick the field goal and you can do it by running or passing. We, as the Town of West Hartford, get to write the plays and we think we're gonna write plays that are: a) specific to the values of West Hartford and b) that are probably gonna be better than most other plays that other towns make. So I hope that helps in terms of kind of differentiating between what's the common part and what's the part that we are and we can excel.

Councilor Hall: So will you have specific ways to measure how we're able to differentiate our schools? And I guess where I'm getting to is all of that goes into our property value. The assumption that our schools are better than another counts. And if we've all adopted common core and everybody's coming out of it in the same way, then what kind of measurement will you have...in all of our meetings, I'm all "how are we measuring this"? But how are we going to say this is how we stand out? Because we're gonna need to do that in order to support the property values here.

Mr. Putterman: Absolutely. And so the SBAC testing – so CMTs and CAPTs for the last 20, 25, 30 years have been the standardized measurement across the state to be able to draw comparisons or make comparisons. Those are going away. SBAC takes its place. Say what you will – I mean I agree with you. I believe in measurement. There are certainly plenty of people who don't who are kind of anti-testing, who don't think that the testing reveals much insight. But I'm not one of those people. I think we need some sort of measurement, as imperfect as it might be. So that will be the form of measurement. How will we differentiate ourselves or why do we think that we're going to continue to be perceived as a stronger school system? For the same reasons that we always have. That we have exceptional teachers, exceptional professional development, exceptional supervision, exceptional curriculum writing, exceptional support from parents, exceptional support from the community. None of that changes with common core. I believe we will do common core better than other districts will do common core. Uncommonly better.

President Slifka: Mrs. Kindall?

Councilor Kindall: I realize, Bruce, you've been here for 70, 80 minutes. So I rarely question the prime minister but if you would indulge us for a couple more moments, I appreciate it. And this may be a question for you and/or for the town manager. There's a couple of items that you sort of hinted on were contingent. And one was that there may or may not be an additional half million dollars of ECS money coming our way and I don't know what percentage of the cost sharing for special ed has been budgeted versus what you are now expecting. In other words, if

you were budgeting at 65% reimbursement and you were expecting 75%, or whether there was some possibility there, as well.

Mr. Putterman: Yeah, uncharacteristically – so typically we budget conservatively on the excess cost sharing. Once we got wind of 75%, we budgeted to the 75%. We're pretty confident that's where it's going to be for next year.

Councilor Kindall: And for this extra ECS money, is that something proposed? I mean you can't budget for something that hasn't been passed.

Mr. Putterman: Right. I mean, again, that's kind of – so our budget basically just deals with expenditures. You guys have to...

Councilor Kindall: Right but you're the one who teased out a little half million dollars of extra ECS money. So what's happening there?

Mr. Putterman: It's subject to the sausage-making legislative process. Senator Bye, I think, is confident that the 500,000 dollars will be there.

President Slifka: Also not ECS money. So for the record, it's excess cost.

Councilor Kindall: Well, is it the extra – is this excess cost money or is it ECS money?

President Slifka: It's related to ECS – first of all, it hasn't passed so we're talking about something proposed. Second, it's related to ECS in the sense that the justification behind it is our supreme underfunding for ECS and Senator Bye thought this was the best she could do to help address that in the current year. But it is not technically ECS because that would be determined by the state through the formula. And this is essentially a special grant that has been proposed and presumably passed by Senator Bye. I see the manager nodding.

Mr. Van Winkle: I would just say as the legislature works through, we always adopt our budget before the legislature makes their final decision. If you look at last year's budget, we assumed certain things were going to be here and they ended up here. And certain things that were here ended up there. So we try, as we get close to the date when you adopt, to get the best possible read we can from the legislature and we will do that with this portion of the funding that's been allocated through the appropriations committee budget. And we'll try to get that read as we get close to your adoption. Is that something we can rely on or is that something we cannot rely on. So we'll tie that one down as we get there along with a whole bunch of other things that are moving within the state budget.

Councilor Kindall: I appreciate it, thank you. And just as sort of a comment, I apologize. I thought – I understood that the chair of the board of education was coming to talk about budget. I didn't realize it was an anything-to-do-with-education kind of discussion. But I – not that one

has to worry about Bruce cause you do such a beautiful job answering all such questions. I was really quite concerned more to Mr. Barnes' point as to this would be his first and last visit to our council in order to answer questions. So to the extent I misunderstood the purpose of the visit, I apologize.

President Slifka: No apology is necessary. The timing of it is such that primarily, our discussion center around the budget but Mr. Putterman has been gracious enough to field questions on all manner of board topics. Someday, there might be a different board chair who feels differently but in terms of the council and board's relationship at the moment, we appreciate that Mr. Putterman has not put any limitations on that – to the extent he thought he was going home earlier than now, I am sorry. But I think it's a very fruitful discussion for both sides. You still have questions or are you done? Is there anybody else? Mr. Doar?

Councilor Doar: One last question, Mr. Mayor. I appreciate everybody's indulgence. Bruce, just going back to what Clare Kindall asked about your budgeting 75% reimbursement for special education. Can you explain to me a little bit more about that just so I understand how the process works? If you wouldn't mind. I do this in light of kind of what Mr. Captain was saying about making sure I understand this a little bit better. I'm not on the board and I'd just appreciate understanding that process a little bit better. Thank you.

Mr. Putterman: So how the excess cost sharing is calculated or how the funding is made available?

Councilor Doar: No, I don't understand it. So I want to hear...Cause I thought what Clare was saying is that when you prepare a budget, there is a process where the Town of West Hartford gets reimbursed for certain services we provide to our students. And then you said we're estimating that we'll get – if we had – if there was 100% or 100 dollars spent, we're expecting to get 75 dollars back. Can you explain, first of all, why you only go it 75 as opposed to 65 or not? Why not 99, for instance? Just that process just so I understand it better.

Mr. Putterman: So it's a little bit of a moving target. But so stepping back, this only applies to special education. So right now, for round number's sake, let's say the average cost of educating a student in West Hartford is 15,000 dollars. It's not that – it's about 13,900 but just to make the math easy, let's say it's 15,000 dollars. Any – so some of our children cost considerably more than 15,000 dollars to educate – our special education children. From children who are outplaced in residential facilities that are gonna cost six figures to children like my son who is with autism and has a one-on-one aide and has co-taught classes, has a special minivan bus that picks him up, has all sorts of other services. He may cost 70,000 dollars, let's say. What the excess cost sharing legislation structure says is that any special education cost above four-and-a-half times the average per-pupil cost – so any special education – if we're using 15,000 dollars – so any special education cost above 67,500 dollars, which if I'm doing my math right is 4.5 times 15. Any special education cost above 67,500 dollars is eligible for excess cost sharing reimbursement. So that's what the calculation is on. On the funding side, my understanding is

that the state has essentially made a pool of money available and in essence, whatever claims come in against that pool kind of drive the percentage that any given – the average percentage of reimbursement across the state for excess cost sharing. So if the state puts in 100 million dollars and there's lots of claims for excess cost sharing, well then the percentage reimbursement goes down. If the state – if there are fewer of those claims, the average goes up. Or the state could put more money into their pool, with the same number of claims, which also would cause the average value of the – the average percentage of the reimbursement claims to be reimbursed. So for the upcoming year, and I don't remember what specifically has happened – whether it's kind of an experience rating based on the level of claims over the last couple of years statewide against a static pool or whether it's that the state has committed more money to the pool assuming the same level of claims, the expectation, regardless, is that we can expect to have about 75% of our excess cost sharing claims reimbursed. The law says I'm entitled to 100% but at the appropriations level, they're not actually funding reimbursement by 100%. Is that clear?

Councilor Doar: It's a good starting point for me and I appreciate that. We won't – just last question, I promise. For '13-'14, what was your actual reimbursement?

Mr. Putterman: I'll get that for you. I don't know off the top of my head.

Councilor Doar: Thank you very much.

President Slifka: Mr. Captain?

Councilor Captain: If I may, Mr. Doar, it doesn't help that excess cost for special ed and education cost share won't start with EC and end with S. They are separate and distinct and the 500,000 is for the excess costs related to special education and not the ECS reimbursement that we're basically way underfunded.

Councilor Doar: Thank you, Harry.

President Slifka: Is that correct, Mr. Putterman?

Mr. Putterman: Actually I didn't think that it was – I don't know.

President Slifka: Mr. Van Winkle has...

Mr. Van Winkle: I don't think it's either of them. It is a separate grant that is being appropriated to the Town of West Hartford to assist us with our educational costs. It's a separate – it will be received directly to the town, not to the special ed program. But it will come directly to the town so whatever letters you want to put on it, it's an additional 500,000 dollars that was part of the state support for West Hartford's education program.

President Slifka: I think I confused it cause I refer to it as an excess cost grant – not meaning to tie it like you guys did but yes – okay. We're all on the same page. It's 500,000 dollars however you count it. Mr. Doar, you were done?

Councilor Doar: I'm done and thank you. And Bruce, whoever said that maybe you weren't so good at math, I want to state for the record you did that beautifully – that last answer.

President Slifka: Okay. Anybody else? Bruce, at the risk of extending it further, I just had a couple kind of clean-up items for you. And first, I want to thank you on behalf of the council for our indulgence and I've been impressed before but I'm mighty impressed with just about everything that's been asked. Even though you weren't necessarily prepared for it, you've been able to answer it or you'll be able to get it to us. And just for your general willingness to do so. As I said, I wanted to cover a couple of quick things related to items that my colleagues raised so they may not – so they may not all be related to each other. Very early on, you were talking about the operating costs of Charter Oak, the new Charter Oak. And I think it was in reference to Mrs. Hall's question which I think her premise was like is a round school more expensive than a square school. And you referenced the increased operating costs that we will be incurring. But I want to just clarify those were not between a round school and a square school or any other shape. Those were just the costs that are going to incur for opening a new facility of that size, right?

Mr. Putterman: Of that size and with that programmatic structure.

President Slifka: Correct.

Mr. Putterman: Right.

President Slifka: Okay, thank you. The – can you – I think this is the only one I may ask you to actually give me a number back but somehow in this entire almost 90-minute, if not more, discussion, nobody mentioned your per-pupil spending number, including yourself. And I did several of these PTO meetings. I commend the board, everybody who's involved, both parties, for the outreach effort they have which I thus, as a result, found it a little bit disingenuous that there was some suggestion that the process was flawed and it was a surprise you were voting when you did because I participated with people of the other party in presenting this budget to PTOs and it was very well done by those colleagues. And so I'm a little surprised. But one thing touted by everybody on the board was their pride in your per-pupil spending number no matter how their ultimate vote on the budget went. Could you please provide that to us?

Mr. Putterman: So I'll provide the number and a little context about it. So in – last school year, the average per-pupil spending was 13,719 dollars. If we were to spend at the average of DRG B – so for those of you who don't know, the state is divided up into DRGs. That stands for district reference group and it's a way of ganging like towns. So we're in DRG B. Sorry, so we're in DRG B and other towns that are in DRG B are towns that are – well, the problem, of course, is that West Hartford is unlike any other town really in the state. But the towns that are in our

DRG are Greenwich, Newtown, South Windsor, Fairfield – so you get the idea. If we were to spend at the average per-pupil rate of DRG B, which is 14,432 dollars per student, our budget would be 7.4 million dollars higher – or at least our budget request would be 7.4 million dollars higher than what it is. If we were to spend state average – state average is 14,498 dollars, our budget request would be 8.1 million dollars higher. So that to us is another indication of the efficiency with which we deliver education in West Hartford. There's always lots of questions at our board meetings regarding our performance compared to other DRG B towns who don't have some of the socioeconomic diversity that we have in West Hartford. And sometimes we fall short on a couple of measures. And yet on the comparison to other DRG B towns in terms of spending, we are spending considerably less per pupil than other DRG B towns.

President Slifka: Thank you for the answer and the context. This one actually may be more for the manager. Just quickly, we had a little dialogue about comparing Bristow and our experience there – the cost of that to what we expect from Charter Oak. And Mr. Captain and I go back – we actually were part of the group that proposed that and voted for it. And correct me if I'm wrong, but I hope you don't have to. I think although Bristow came in at 25 million as a construction cost and Charter Oak projects out at 40, in terms of the cost to the town, we actually paid significantly more for Bristow than we will for Charter Oak because of the rate of reimbursement. And if I'm right, I believe we were actually only reimbursed roughly 37% for Bristow and we're gonna be reimbursed 80% for Charter Oak.

Mr. Van Winkle: Very impressive. Yes, it was 37% – having done that project. Yes, you're correct. Our reimbursement was 37% for Bristow and it's 80% for Charter Oak. Both cases, it is eligible costs that we deal with in those. So – and we're still seeking some legislation to clarify that that will help us on those eligible costs. Right now, we're estimating approximately 16 million of taxpayers' dollars are going into Charter Oak. And we hope to be able to reduce that to about nine million with some legislation clarification.

President Slifka: Thank you. And sort of on the per-pupil spending piece, Mr. Putterman, I want to thank you for having come to do this tonight, from establishing a rapport with us where you've been doing it for some years and it's happened in both directions. One item that, again, did not get mentioned yet, which I kind of put under myth correction, I think there's a part of why I think it's good that you're here and you're here in front of the cameras and God and everybody is that all this is public. This isn't one of the committee meetings we have where there are no cameras. There's usually no press and people say a lot of things behind closed doors that they wouldn't say when they were out here. And so I think this has proven to be a very effective thing to help teach the town about what we really are dealing with in our budget. And one of those things that you and I were dealing with when we first took office and you have – and the board has now established as essentially a reversal – you reversed something that was a bit of a myth and I'll explain what it is in a second. It deals with the issue of surplus. That – and I think it just needs to be recognized that I remember when we were all taking office, there was sort of a myth that would go around and we'd have our budget hearings like we do tonight and somebody would invariably come and say that board, they spend every nickel and at the end of

the year, they usually have this big-lump sum available. And on the last day of school, they send out a bunch of purchase orders in order – everybody in town – to get rid of the money, spend whatever you have to. And, in fact, just to clarify and stress how that is not – if it ever happened, it's certainly not happened in many years. That you and the board have been returning – if you've had a surplus, you have returned that directly to the town which I think is also important to point out in reference to the possibility of future revenue – enhanced revenue coming in through ECS that you didn't count on that. And say we think that Bye's gonna get us more money so let's up the budget in anticipation of that. You didn't do that. And in an event that something came in like that was essentially yours cause it was for education, that's been returned to the town. And that's been your policy for a long time. So thank you for that. And if you want to elaborate on that, but...

Mr. Putterman: I just want to thank Councilors Captain and Kindall, both of whom – and Harry, you in particular, when you served on board, were a big proponent of making sure that we did, in fact, exert more discipline out at the schools to make sure we could bring – give something back to the town at the end of the year and it is now institutionalized in how we do business.

President Slifka: Thank you. The last question I have, maybe I save the most difficult one for last but I think it's very pertinent to, though we've had a very wide-ranging discussion, we do have a budget to vote on in roughly two weeks and I think this is key. This isn't my first rodeo and I think one of the things that happens is that we'll get to a budget night and there will be a proposal that'll say let's cut the board budget by X amount. And a few questions that my colleagues asked tonight were attempting to flush that out a little bit because you had a little mini version of that in board discussions already. But the council can often be at an informational disadvantage if we haven't had that dialogue with you and so one person says I think we need to cut by a million, they'll find it. And somebody else says well, we don't know what they're going to do with it. It's been pointed out several times, our role is to just give you a line item. We can't dictate where it is, even if we thought we could find an easy way – we'd have to rely on you doing that. I, for one, don't think there's an easy way. I appreciate the dialogues we've had which I think bear that out. But if you were asked by the council to cut, where would you go? And I'll just – I'm not asking you to give a line – just – because it's a very general thing. I'm not giving you a hard dollar amount but what are the kinds of things that would be on the list that the board would be forced to look at if the council voted to reduce you from the budget that you've already approved?

Mr. Putterman: As it always is, it's a bit of a Sophie's choice, right? I mean there are – we haven't asked for anything that is superfluous, that is not important to educating our children, keeping our children safe, both physically safe and emotionally safe. We would have to think long and hard about that and go through a process to try to determine which values trump other values in terms of making reductions. I will say I don't think that there are – I don't think there's a lot of fat. We've had the conversation in the past about administrators and so on the subject of myths, low and behold, we are able to determine what our ranking is in terms of average pay per administrator. It's 126th out of 162 districts in the state. So we're not top heavy in terms of

administrators. We – is there – so I’m in marketing, right? The old joke in marketing is half of my advertising budget is wasted, I just don’t know which half. And so it’s kind of the same thing when you have a 146 million-dollar budget. Are there little pockets that maybe we could be more efficient around? Sure. In any organization that’s 146 million dollars, there are pockets. You just can’t really identify them in advance. So we’re not gonna be able to cut our way to some big number with 10 and 15,000-dollar cuts. We’re just not gonna get there. So what that means is if you all do, in fact, come back to us and say – I’m not even gonna throw a number out there – I don’t even want to kind of create any sort of expectation. But if you were to give us some big number, then we would have to find big chunks to cut. So what are some of those big chunks? I mean the easiest one and frankly the ones that gets parents, understandably and appropriately, most upset is class size. Could you cut a team at the middle school and save 360,000 dollars? Sure. But then class size is gonna go from 19 students per class to 24 students per class in one of our middle schools. So the people on the other side of town will say well why one middle school and not the other? So could you cut two teams, one at each middle school, and save 720,000 dollars? Sure but then you have double the number of kids who are in class sizes that are 24 instead of 19. And by the way, that would then be at a time when new research is emerging that does, in fact, suggest that class size does have impact on academic achievement. And I say this as somebody who, for many years, relied on earlier research that suggested that it didn’t particularly have an impact. So I eat a little crow on that. There is new research – so class size is one kind of obvious big-chunk-of-change-place to go. We added a half – I mentioned this before. We added half a clinical supervisor for the mental health needs of our students. We think that’s vitally important for any number of reasons in the wake of Newtown and even we were starting to have those conversations prior to Newtown. Could we postpone that? Sure but there’s a huge risk to that in terms of the mental health of our students. So those are the kind of value-type of questions that we would have to grapple with and we’re hoping that day doesn’t come.

President Slifka: I appreciate the answer. Thank you, Bruce. That was the end of my questions. Anybody else have anything? Go ahead, Chris.

Councilor Barnes: Mr. Putterman, thank you again. One statistic you just mentioned, in terms of pay for administrators in town, the Town of West Hartford ranked 126th in the state in terms of pay for administrators. Is that correct? Is that for salary or is that full benefits?

Mr. Putterman: That’s salary.

Councilor Barnes: Just salary?

Mr. Putterman: Yeah, that’s just salary.

Councilor Barnes: Okay, so that doesn’t take into consideration pension benefits.

Mr. Putterman: Correct.

Councilor Barnes: Healthcare benefits.

Mr. Putterman: The state deals with – provides pensions.

Councilor Barnes: Okay.

Mr. Putterman: To administrators and to teachers.

Councilor Barnes: Okay.

President Slifka: Let's have one answer because it's jumping around.

Councilor Barnes: A little decorum so we can get through the...

President Slifka: One answer – Bruce maybe – oh, did you answer? I'm sorry. Even I couldn't hear. You're set. Are you guys okay with...? Go ahead, Chris.

Councilor Barnes: I appreciate it. A little decorum, it's getting late. So 126th in salaries and that doesn't include the rest of the benefits that the administrators receive. Is that correct? Thank you.

President Slifka: Okay. Anything else?

Councilor Barnes: I just have a follow-up on...

President Slifka: Go ahead, Mr. Barnes.

Councilor Barnes: Mr. Putterman, while we're on that topic, do you have an understanding of how the Town of West Hartford ranks if you take into consideration not only salary but the full benefit package, as well? How do the town administrators fare statewide in terms of overall compensation?

Mr. Putterman: I'm not aware that the state collects that data. I know they collect salary data. I'm not aware that they collect or report on the fully-burdened compensation.

Councilor Barnes: Because you're familiar with – you could take the cost of a full-time equivalent or a full-time employee and it would be salary, benefits, etc. – you'd be able to calculate a number of what that total compensation package is and then be able to compare that to the other towns in the state. It's your understanding the state doesn't collect that type of data?

Mr. Putterman: I don't believe so. In my ten years on the board, I've never seen it. I will say this. The pension – because it's a state pension, the pension comes out of that equation because it's the same for every teacher in town – in the state. And from a health plan perspective, given

kind of the nature of binding arbitration and referencing other – negotiated settlements in other towns, there's not a big delta on health plans that I'm aware of between what we offer our teachers and administrators versus what other towns offer their teachers and administrators. So I think the salary is your greatest variability and your best price.

Councilor Barnes: Thank you.

President Slifka: Alright. Mr. Captain?

Councilor Captain: Mr. Van Winkle, can you help me with – I believe that the teachers – okay, so the teachers and the administrators are not in the pension. They are in the state teachers' pension. But as far as the healthcare benefits go, I believe the teachers' plan or the town's plan for benefits is more rich than actually the teachers' plan. Is that correct?

Mr. Van Winkle: Yeah. The teachers have a choice at retirement to join the state's health plan or the town's health plan. And over the past several years, the teachers have opted for the state health plan because it's a better benefit to them. So we don't see any of that cost when they retire.

Councilor Captain: But even prior to retirement, their actual healthcare plan – ours is more expensive than theirs?

Mr. Van Winkle: Yes, it is.

President Slifka: Okay. Anything else? Alright. Mr. Putterman, thank you again. It's been almost two hours. Thank you for your indulgence and boy, I think you've got enough revenge for apparently waiting a half an hour to speak. We really killed you tonight.

Mr. Putterman: It's been my pleasure and I'll get back to everybody with answers to the unanswered questions tomorrow if that's okay.

President Slifka: Thanks very much, Bruce. Okay. Believe it or not, we're back to reports from the town manager. Yeah, well...

Mr. Van Winkle: I'll just get – a couple of quick things. I wanted everybody to know beginning April 21st, we're going to start our first yard waste cleanup. So if you've been out raking your gardens and stuff and you get a minute to – those recyclable bags that you can pick up – we'll be around the week of April 21st doing our first pickup. We're going to do one pickup each month this year. So there'll be one in April, one in May, and one in June. The first one we scheduled is April 21st. You can put your stuff out on the same day that your garbage is picked up and we'll pick up that. The golf course is open. It's a good time to go play golf because it's not very busy, right? And the weather is great to get out. Put a sweater on, you'll be just fine out there. The

golf course is open and we're offering some specials for playing out there. Good Friday is next week. The trash will still be picked up on Good Friday. That's all I have.

President Slifka: Thank you, Mr. Van Winkle. Is there any question from the council for the manager? Okay. We move to #7, Mrs. Cantor.

ITEM #7: CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT CALENDAR

Councilor Cantor: I move that we place items 14, 16, 21 through 25 on the consent calendar.

Councilor Kindall: Second.

President Slifka: Motion is made and seconded. Any discussion? Seeing none, all those in favor?

All: Aye.

President Slifka: Those opposed? Motion carries. #8. Mrs. Cantor?

ITEM #8: APPLICATION ON BEHALF OF A.K. CENTRAL LIMITED PARTNERSHIP, OWNER OF 11 AND 13-17 SOUTH MAIN STREET, ABUTTING PROPERTIES ON THE WEST SIDE OF SOUTH MAIN STREET IN THE TOWN CENTER TO DESIGNATE THOSE PROPERTIES AS A SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT IN ORDER TO REMOVE THE MASONIC TEMPLE BUILDING AT 11 SOUTH MAIN STREET AND CONSTRUCT A FOUR-STORY BUILDING IN ITS PLACE WITH 21 RESIDENTIAL UNITS ON THE UPPER FLOORS, COMMERCIAL USES ON THE FIRST FLOOR, AND A TWENTY-ONE SPACE UNDERGROUND PARKING GARAGE. THE PROPERTIES ARE CURRENTLY ZONED CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT (BC).

TABLED

Councilor Cantor: I move that we table.

President Slifka: Okay. All those in favor? I'm getting a quizzical look from Mr. Davidoff and Mr. Captain. Well, we opened the hearing and we don't have a date to set this for so we can't – and it's not withdrawn like the next one. Alright. It's getting later by the minute.

Councilor Barnes: Aye.

President Slifka: Thank you, Mr. Barnes. Those opposed? Motion carries. Okay, #9 is withdrawn. #10, Mrs. Cantor.

ITEM #10: ORDINANCE PERMITTING HELIPORTS

ADOPTED AS AMENDED, VOTE 8-1

WHEREAS the use of helicopters to provide emergency transportation for accident victims has become increasingly common; and

WHEREAS corporations occasionally use helicopters to transport staff to local facilities for site visits; and

WHEREAS a recent Presidential visit to the Hartford area involved significant traffic disruption which might have been mitigated had a helicopter landing site been available nearby; and

WHEREAS a small number of sites in West Hartford can support helicopter landing sites without undue causing impacts upon neighboring properties; and

WHEREAS the use of permanent helicopter landing sites promotes safer flight operations than is possible when *ad hoc* facilities are used

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF WEST HARTFORD THAT:

Section One. Chapter 177 of the West Hartford Code of Ordinances is hereby amended by the addition of the following new section thereto:

(New) Section 177-16.9. Aircraft Landing Sites.

A. Definitions:

Flight Operation. A combination of one (1) landing and one (1) takeoff by which a helicopter arrives at and departs from a heliport.

Heliport. A site at ground level for the landing and takeoff of manned helicopters (but excluding other forms of aircraft capable of vertical takeoffs or landings) which:

- (1) Has been approved by the Connecticut Airport Authority as a “Heliport”; and
- (2) Meets the definition of a Prior Permission Required (PPR) heliport as set forth in U. S. Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration Advisory Circular No. 150/5390-2C, dated April 24, 2012, as amended or replaced from time to time. These facilities are commonly known as “restricted heliports” or “restricted landing areas.”

B. Permitted Use.

(1) One (1) non-revenue producing heliport, including any equipment necessary to permit safe operations, shall be permitted as an accessory use in any zone, subject to the requirements of West Hartford Code of Ordinances §177-42A and the additional requirements set forth in this section.

(2) Heliports incorporating permanent taxiways and/or parking pads or which include maintenance, repair and/or fueling facilities shall only be permitted within industrial zones. This subsection shall not be construed to prohibit occasional refueling of a helicopter from a tanker truck or similar vehicle which is not routinely kept on site but any such refueling shall be conducted in accord with the requirements of subsection C(7) of this section.

(3) At the time notice is mailed to adjoining property owners pursuant to §177-42A(2) of this chapter, the Commission shall also send such notice to all other owners of property within 500 feet of the property which is the subject of any application for approval of a Heliport.

C. Specific Requirements.

(1) The applicant shall submit plans certified by a qualified professional demonstrating that the heliport has been designed to comply with all standards for heliport design which are set forth in U. S. Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration Advisory Circular No. 150/5390-2C, dated April 24, 2012, as amended or replaced from time to time. In recognition of the fact that compliance with those standards is not mandatory for PPR heliports, deviations therefrom may be permitted for good cause provided that such deviations are enumerated in the Special Use Permit application and are identified on the plans.

(2) The applicant shall identify the design helicopter used to design the heliport. Aircraft exceeding maximum weight, maximum contact load/minimum contact area, overall length, rotor diameter, tail rotor arc radius, undercarriage dimensions or pilot's eye height of the design helicopter shall not be permitted to use the aircraft landing site.

(3) Operation of Aircraft Landing Sites shall be limited to the hours between 8:00 am and 8:00 pm and shall be limited to eighteen (18) flight operations per year. The operator of a heliport shall keep a log listing the date, time and purpose of all flight operations and shall provide the Town Planner with a copy of said log for the one-year period from the date when the first flight operation takes place and annually thereafter. In approving any specific aircraft landing site the Plan and Zoning Commission may further limit the frequency of use and hours of operation as well as the type(s) or specifications of helicopters which may be used. In considering such limitations the Commission is encouraged to approve only the minimum hours of operations and number of flight operations which are necessary to meet the actual needs of the applicant.

- (4) Lights associated with operation of the heliport, including any illuminated windsock or wind cone, shall be lit only for so long as is reasonably necessary to permit the pilot to locate the heliport and complete the landing and/or takeoff operations.
- (5) The outer boundary of the safety area surrounding the touchdown and liftoff area shall be located at least 150 feet from the nearest property line including all equipment associated therewith.
- (6) The applicant shall specifically state whether the heliport is intended to permit instrument operations. All equipment required to facilitate instrument operations shall be located within the boundaries of the property on which the heliport is located. All equipment or facilities associated with instrument operations shall be identified on the plans including, but not limited to, lighting, radio direction finding (RDF), instrument landing system (ILS) or other navigational aids. Where backup power supplies are proposed, the location of such equipment shall also be identified. The Plan and Zoning Commission may limit or prohibit the installation of instrument operation equipment which will unreasonably impair the use or enjoyment of surrounding properties.
- (7) At heliports where fueling facilities are permitted, such facilities shall be constructed, maintained and operated in accord with all provisions of law applicable thereto. In addition such facilities shall comply with all standards for aircraft fuel storage, handling, training and dispensing on airports which are set forth in U. S. Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration Advisory Circular No. 150/5230-4B, dated September 28, 2012 (including those standards of the National Fire Prevention Association which are referenced therein), as amended or replaced from time to time.

D. Exceptions.

The provisions of this section shall not apply to:

- (1) Emergency landings of aircraft required as a result of a pilot-declared distress or urgency condition.
- (2) The landing and take-off of passenger-carrying balloons provided that takeoffs from a particular parcel of land shall be limited to no more than two days within a calendar year.
- (3) Air medical helicopter landings and takeoffs for the purpose of emergency patient care.
- (4) Landings and take-offs by federal, state or local government officials or their authorized agents in the exercise of government responsibilities, including training.

E. Construction.

Nothing in this section shall be construed to establish, validate or otherwise create air rights in or to any property. The approval of any special use permit pursuant to this section shall not be construed to limit, in any way, the subsequent development of surrounding property in any manner permitted under law.

Councilor Kindall: Second.

Councilor Cantor: I move that we adopt.

Councilor Kindall: Second.

President Slifka: Okay. We had public hearing earlier. Mr. Alair is back with, I assume, amendments and conditions of approval. Go ahead, Mr. Alair.

Mr. Alair: Amendments, not conditions of approval. But first I think we should all pause for a moment to thank Mr. Gordon for staying here and not leaving town and joining the witness protection program, all of which he would have had time to do in the time he's spent here. I'm pausing while we pass out a copy of the ordinance which incorporates some of the changes we talked about earlier. I did a couple of different things and let me just walk through them and explain how they go together. I boldfaced the language that I've added to this draft. The first addition occurs about two-thirds of the way down the first page where I've added a definition of the term light operation. We have been talking about landings, takeoffs, what's what. I used the term flight operation to basically refer to a roundtrip of a landing and takeoff. That the heliport isn't built with the helicopter already sitting on it. The first thing that happens is a helicopter lands and then it's going to take off again. That is the first flight operation.

President Slifka: Mrs. Hall?

Councilor Hall: Do we have to specify the amount of time that that takeoff and departure has to take place within?

Mr. Alair: A helicopter could conceivably be parked at the heliport so I didn't want to do that for that reason. So having defined the term flight operation, we'll come back to that in a minute. The next change is at the very top of the next page where I added the term nonrevenue-producing heliport in lieu of heliport for noncommercial passenger use. We had talked about that one. And then the rest of the changes all occur at the bottom of that second page where I added a limitation of 18 flight operations per year, a requirement that the operator of the heliport keep a log listing date, time, and purpose. And there's a typo – of all flight operations and shall provide the town planner with a copy of that log for the period one year from the date of opening and then annually thereafter. And then the last one is a condition which gets to Mayor Slifka raised during the hearing which is encouraging the commission to, in essence, look hard at the number of operations and the hours of operation that it permits, and limiting them to those necessary to meet actual needs. I was very deliberate in using the term encouraged, as opposed to shall. I

don't think you want to make it so definitive that somebody sits at the TPZ going well, should it be 12 or should it be 13? We can't justify 13 – we end up agonizing over something like that. I think you want to encourage them – and have them exercise their judgment but give them the message that you want them to be very cautious in the approach. And those are the changes.

President Slifka: Thank you, Mr. Alair. I appreciate the part about encouragement. I know I was sort of asking you on a vagary there and as usual, you came up with something great. I'm sorry, I'm just going through notes to see – okay. There's one – I don't think – maybe our discussion at the public hearing didn't rise to the level of consensus to put it into the amendments yet. But I'm wondering if we wanted to entertain extending the notice zone – if there's an application before the TPZ, if that was something that would go in here?

Mr. Alair: It would go in here. Currently, it stands at 500 feet. It's in subsection B3, about a third of the way down the second page.

President Slifka: Okay, I'm sorry. It is specified in there. That was a default rule, okay.

Mr. Alair: And by the way, one person who spoke during the hearing seemed to misunderstand that it was 500 feet from the heliport itself. It's from the property line.

President Slifka: Thank you. Okay, well we could either go into discussion or move the amendments and then entertain discussion of the full item. So it's up to you guys but I need somebody to move the amendments if you want to go in that direction. Oh, go ahead, Mr. Barnes. I'm sorry. I didn't mean to be presumptuous.

Councilor Barnes: Just a comment on the amendment, if we're going to define flight operations as capital F, capital O, as a defined term in here, I prefer that under C3 and otherwise where it appears in the ordinance that it be capitalized. And I think in some places, heliport is also – appears to be defined and in some places capitalized and in sometimes it's not. I don't know if that was intended.

Mr. Alair: No, it should not be capitalized. The convention in our zoning ordinance is that defined terms are not capitalized when they are used. I know that in many purposes, such as contracts, a defined term is capitalized but we have so many defined terms in our zoning ordinances, that if you actually capitalized every time you used them, you go a bit crazy.

Councilor Barnes: Okay. Then with that clarification, then under definitions, the O of operations then should be lower case?

Mr. Alair: I'm not sure where...

Councilor Barnes: Under definitions, A, flight operations appears capital F, capital O. Flight operations.

Mr. Alair: Oh, okay.

Councilor Barnes: If you're gonna use that view of how you do it, then the O would be lower case.

Mr. Alair: You're absolutely right. In the definition, when you define the term, you define the term initially using it as a title with the capital. Then you don't capitalize it afterwards. I'm sorry.

Councilor Barnes: Very good. Thanks for the clarification.

President Slifka: Okay. Anyone else?

Councilor Doar: I'll make the motion to move the amendments.

President Slifka: Okay. Is there a second?

Multiple councilors: Second.

President Slifka: Okay. Any discussion on the amendments? I'll throw it out there. I'd be interested in – to see what you guys think of making it – extending the 500 feet to say 1,000. But I'm not wedded to it but...

Councilor Doar: I'm okay with that.

President Slifka: Okay. Anyone else?

Councilor Barnes: I think 500 is sufficient.

President Slifka: Okay. Well if you disagree with me, that's fine. I just...

Councilor Kindall: Should we do the amendments and then just sort of discuss all of it because I think it's kind of a package. But if you want to...

President Slifka: I was trying to make it easy, just to get it over with because I didn't sense there were any other changes to it. But I'm not – I'm not sensing that anybody's excited about it and Mr. Barnes pointed – he thinks it's enough. Thank you for supporting me, Mr. Doar but I'll withdraw the suggestion and we'll just return to discussion on the amendments themselves. Anything else? Okay. All those in favor of the amendments?

All: Aye.

President Slifka: Those opposed? Okay. The amendments have passed so we now return to discussion of the proposed ordinance as amended by the items in front of us. Any further discussion on that? Go ahead. Mr. Gordon!

Mr. Gordon: I will be heard from!

President Slifka: Wow!

Mr. Gordon: But I just want to say that while I was not at the original meeting, I did read the full transcript for the record of the original meeting and have a full understanding of what is being proposed and what was said for the record.

President Slifka: Thank you, sir. Any other discussion? Alright, I feel like somebody ought to say something. Chris, you're gonna...

Councilor Barnes: Sure. I'll say something.

President Slifka: Go ahead.

Councilor Barnes: I'm gonna vote in favor of the ordinance. I think the testimony from Dr. Robinson the last time we were here, who serves as the director of the Life Star program, outlined the importance of this ordinance and having the option of providing this type of heliport in West Hartford, particularly on the west side of town is compelling. The limitation of 18 flights strikes me as reasonable. I also think that when we pass this ordinance, it's not like everybody in town is gonna quickly go out and file an application to start landing helicopters in town. There's also the additional protection of the TPZ, that review process, their application, their analysis, their public hearing, any limitations that they emote and pose based upon their review of the application. So I think there are protections in place in that regard and otherwise, I think the ordinance actually gives us an ability to regulate something that, based upon what we heard this evening, sounds like it's not something we could otherwise regulate – that people could land helicopters anywhere in town and we couldn't do anything about it. So this at least gives us an opportunity to regulate it. So I'm gonna vote in favor of the ordinance.

President Slifka: Thank you, Mr. Barnes. Mrs. Cantor?

Councilor Cantor: Thank you. I agree with Mr. Barnes. I welcome the – our conditions. I think they incorporated a lot of my concerns. One thing that I found compelling was the discussion of the – and I can't remember the gentleman's name, I'm sorry, who owned the helicopter business – and he was talking about Katrina and Sandy and we personally were hit and you could not get over Avon Mountain when Sandy came. And I don't think we've seen the last of those unfortunately – very, very severe, strange 100-year storms. So this does give us a place that – hopefully a safer place to land in case of an emergency, not just a Life Star situation but somewhere – maybe we need to get water to people in an area where otherwise, it is very, very hard to reach. So I welcome that and I would encourage – and I don't think I'd make it a

condition on the approval – but encourage the TPZ when they are approving a specific application that they have that homeowner or business owner, whatever, give their condition – their approval, sort of flat approval for any emergency vehicles that want to land. Thank you.

President Slifka: Thank you, Mrs. Cantor. Mrs. Hall?

Councilor Hall: Thank you. I will also be approving – voting for this ordinance. I do think that it just makes us safer in West Hartford. I think it puts the framework around it – the woman who died in the Life Star crash, that was a classmate of mine. And the idea that we're going to be able to, in certain areas that fit this very definitive space requirement, have the ability to build a safe place for helicopters to land. Makes sense to me and I am very much in favor of it. Thank you.

President Slifka: Thank you, Mrs. Hall. Mr. Davidoff?

Councilor Davidoff: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. I, too, will be supporting this ordinance this evening and I'm really glad to see that the town planning and zoning commission will review all applications under special use permit. And what's important about a special use permit is they'll need to make a determination whether or not the applicant has satisfied the criteria necessary under section 177-42 which addresses quality, the nature of the operation, the location, and it basically deals with a quality-of-life issue. And I think a lot of the things that we discussed this evening with respect to making changes in the definitions and limitations addressed the quality-of-life issues. And I think what's important to note is that we, as a body, understand the significance of permitting heliports in town but it's done with the balance that we're not gonna – it's not going to be a permitted use which is going to impair the quality of life of neighboring property owners who have rights to quiet enjoyment of their property. And I think that's a very significant point to point out. So we had a lot of discussion about noise, about frequency, and I think a lot of discussion that we've had in our committee centered around that these would be pre-established locations that would be safer than landing on grass surfaces to be used in medical circumstances. And I think the community at large would have a pretty fine understanding and acceptance of permitting uses of helicopters for lifesaving ventures and needs. With respect to people just flying in for the occasional social event, I don't really think that's what we're trying to do here. I know that we won't be able to regulate it fully but I think what comes out of this entire discussion is there needs to be a balance as to what constitutes a good neighbor and with the use that you're going to be granted by the town, are you being neighborly, are you doing things that will better the quality of life for those who reside in West Hartford. And I think that's a standard I hold myself to – to make decisions that basically improve the quality of life in the town and to make safe decisions and sound decisions. And I think we've done a lot of due diligence here this evening and I'm certain that our colleagues on the zoning board, when they are faced with these obligations, will consider all those aspects when they render a decision as to whether or not a particular property is a suitable location for a heliport. So with all that said, I will be supporting this ordinance this evening.

President Slifka: Thank you, Mr. Davidoff. Anyone else? Mrs. Kindall?

Councilor Kindall: I'm really – I'm struggling as to whether or not to support this particular ordinance. And frankly if it was simply a spot zoning permitting on Avon Mountain, I think I'd be much happier about it. I think 18 flights a year is a lot. It's more than once a month. If you take it 36 trips, that's three a month. I think that there is a heliport on Avon Mountain along the ridge at Talcott. I think that I'm very concerned about how many heliports you could have in West Hartford. I think that helicopters could be very loud. I think that – I wouldn't care to have one landing next – in my neighbor's backyard at 8:00 at night. I think that – I live on a very small lot so I don't think I'm at any risk of having it land in my neighbor's backyard. But if you have even a helicopter fly over for the traffic as a rare thing, you hear it for a long way away. Just the flight, not to mention the landing. And yet, I think that the town staff has done an outstanding job on this ordinance. I really am impressed by the quality and the depth and the care that has gone in this work. I note that there are like 33 heliports around the Hartford area and I have to admit that if you have 33 heliports in the Hartford area and surrounding area, they haven't all been over my house. They haven't seemed to interfere with my quality of life. But I'm struggling. I mean part of me really wants to vote for this and part of me really wants to not vote for this and I don't know where I come out yet.

President Slifka: Anybody else? Mr. Captain?

Councilor Captain: Thank you Mr. Mayor. I, too, would like to thank Mr. Alair for all of his hard work in this and I would also like to thank Mr. Chase for basically being one of the first persons to bring it to our attention. And where I don't get worried about it is this is the first person who's brought it to our attention in 100 years of being a town. And if you can land anywhere you want, you still can anywhere you want unfortunately – on grass or whatever. So I just think – it just makes it safer. If somebody wants to use aircraft and has one of the 38 sites where it's applicable and can build a safer environment for that aircraft to land, I think it's safer for everybody all around. And that's why I'll be supporting the ordinance this evening.

President Slifka: Thank you, Mr. Captain. Mr. Doar, go ahead.

Councilor Doar: I agree with Mr. Captain on this. I think the key whereas clause in the ordinance is whereas the use of permit helicopter landing sites promotes safer flight operations than is possible with an ad hoc facility. Clearly there's been significant testimony to demonstrate that that will be the case if we support this ordinance. I think that's really all this is about. An effort, as someone said – and I don't think it was Mr. Ashton, Deputy Mayor Cantor, but it might have been Mr. Chase himself who commented that actually West Hartford's proud tradition as a town has been one that's been quite progressive with respect to certain zoning issues over a long period of time. And actually, when it comes to heliports, we're actually pretty far behind other like-minded and similarly situated towns. And so for those reasons, I think in the spirit of really promoting safety, I'm also gonna support this ordinance.

President Slifka: Thank you. Anyone else? Well, I'm gonna support it. I had some – it's an initial reluctance certainly this came to us and I think this is one situation where the public hearing process, at least for me, was very valuable, particularly Mr. Alair's work not only in drafting, but in answering the questions and getting me to understand the actual impact. I think – my ambivalence comes from putting myself in the position of the neighbors. We have heard from – it's got to be noted. We have heard from some who live near there. A few, if any, actually showed up to testify but there was some email communication about it that this is gonna be disruptive and it's not welcome and all that. I completely understand. We have a formal opinion from the Town of Avon, that is impacted by this, that thought about it and said that they don't think it's appropriate for a residential area. That said, they also said they think – putting my words not theirs – that they – if we were to put restrictions on the number of flights, that that's probably a good way to deal with it if we were going to improve it in some way. And so when I think about it, at the end, do I want to grant kind of a blanket approval for this? Of course not. But what makes me feel more comfortable is the check and balance it builds in which I think gets back to Mr. Barnes' original comments that the TPZ will then sit through – remember this is just granting a right. This is not about Mr. Chase. It's not about any of the only 37, I guess, other properties in town where it could even qualify. So that's a very small group. And that the TPZ will intensely look at who that person is, where the location is situated, what the neighbors think about it, and they've been empowered and they, to Mr. Alair's particular amendment, will be encouraged to make it as minimal as possible so that it limits the disruption as much as possible. And even with all that, I think well, no. Am I still sufficiently comfortable? Something could go wrong there. It'd be easy to just, sort of as a throwaway, say no, you know what? I'm gonna be the one that says no and the neighbors will be pleased with. And then you get hit with something like Dr. Robertson – Robertson or Robinson? Robinson's testimony and that's awfully compelling. And Mrs. Hall mentioned that her friend and classmate was a person who died in one of these accidents. And I say you know what? It's a pretty good check and balance on my own maybe cavaliness about saying I'll just vote against it. So I admit the ambivalence but that's – if everything was easy, if we didn't have any ambivalence about it, they wouldn't need a town council. So I'm taking that into consideration and on the whole, I think it's okay. I think it will make things better in the community. It will hopefully save some lives. I don't know if it makes us safer but it will save some lives if that happens – if something terrible happens. And in the end, I gotta have some faith in our administration and the people who will serve on the TPZ if and when one of these comes to us and putting the proper restraint on it to protect the neighborhood. And frankly, I think – Mr. Chase is still here. I think some of this is clouded by the fact that Mr. Chase has been so honest about it. He could have not testified. He could have sat in the background and people have said well maybe Mr. Chase is thinking about this. Well that's exactly what he was thinking here. And so that has led into maybe some speculation that it's spot zoning but it's not. Will he be impacted by it? He sure will. He said so. But I also think that he's cognizant of the impact upon his neighbors and given all that, I think we've got enough there to keep it in line. And I'm comfortable voting in favor of it. This being an ordinance, we need a roll call. So Ms. Labrot, if you could do that if there's nothing else.

Councilors Barnes, Cantor, Captain, Davidoff, Doar, Hall, Slifka and Mr. Gordon voted Yes.

Councilor Kindall: No, but not for the reasons as stated by the mayor.

Ms. Labrot: Okay. Approved.

President Slifka: Okay. #11. I have to sit this one out. So...

ITEM #11: ORDINANCE REVISING PROCEDURES FOR OBTAINING DRIVEWAY PERMITS

ADOPTED, VOTE 8-0

Councilor Cantor: Okay. There's a motion, second, right? Harry?

Councilor Kindall: #11, ordinance revising procedures for obtaining driveway permits. I move that we adopt.

Councilor Captain: Second.

Councilor Cantor: Okay, motion's been made and seconded. Can we have a – Mr. Van Winkle?

Mr. Van Winkle: This was the subject of a public hearing earlier tonight. The ordinance really puts into our ordinances words that reflect our actual practice. You are required in the Town of West Hartford to get a permit if you are having your driveway installed or replaced. The purpose of that is because one, you are working in the right-of-way and we have certain restrictions about working in the right-of-way. The second is that when you put your driveway in, you have to ensure that you don't drain the water from your driveway on your neighbor. And so we require permits for people to do that. It also ensures, when that contractor comes in to take that permit, we check to see that he has insurance. So that should be a more reputable contractor than someone who might be knocking on your door saying I'll fix your driveway. So it's something we've done for many years. This just sort of secures the language more clearly than what we had before.

Councilor Cantor: Thank you, Mr. Van Winkle. Any questions? Yes, Mr. Davidoff.

Councilor Davidoff: I'll be supporting this ordinance this evening. We discussed this in community planning and I think that the key part that was brought up in the discussion by the public that was sort of misconstrued but let me just sort of straighten the record. It says where the work involves construction or reconstruction of a private driveway, the property owner shall also sign the application. So there won't be any mystery as to whether or not a contractor's pulled a permit for the driveway work. It's pretty clear. If you have to sign the application, then you're gonna know that you've got a licensed driveway contractor to do the work in the right-of-way. And the town will act as the other part of the check and balance to make certain that the

contractor is licensed with the State of Connecticut and maintains liability insurance to perform the work which is so crucial for the work done in the right-of-way. So I just wanted to get that on the record this evening cause I thought that it was misstated by a member of the public during the public hearing on this zoning ordinance. And I would commend our town engineer, Mr. Martin, for the work that he did with the corporation council in getting this zoning ordinance correct. Thanks.

Councilor Cantor: Thank you, Mr. Davidoff. Mrs. Hall?

Councilor Hall: Thank you. I also just wanted to say I think it's a great practice. I know in the business world, we constantly review our policies and procedures to make sure that they reflect what you're actually doing and what you're empowered to do. And those have to be living, breathing documents that reflect changes in what we do and how we operate. So I will support this and hope that we continue to look at all of our ordinances to make sure they're as accurate as they could be. Thanks.

Councilor Cantor: Thank you, Mrs. Hall. Anyone else? I just had a couple comments. I do think that this is an improvement of solidifying the procedures and making them well known and understanding that both the homeowner and the contractor need to sign it. Water is a huge issue in a lot of our areas and when you have a driveway – I've known people that have had neighbor wars after they've done something like this and it's changed where the water has gone. So I think this is very forward thinking to add – make it – codify it. And I appreciate the work that was done by the engineer and thank you so much. And I think we're gonna do a roll call.

Councilors Barnes, Cantor, Captain, Davidoff, Doar, Hall and Kindall: Yes.

Ms. Labrot: It's unanimous.

President Slifka: Okay. That was comfortable. It's a great seat, though. Front row. Okay. #12, Mrs. Cantor?

ITEM #12: RESOLUTION ABANDONING PARKER STREET

ADOPTED

Councilor Cantor: I move that we adopt.

Councilor Kindall: Second.

President Slifka: Motion's made and seconded. Mr. Van Winkle, would you care to cover this one?

Mr. Van Winkle: Yes. Parker Street is a street that used to run up to the door of Charter Oak School. Twenty years ago, there was a street that ended in a cul-de-sac at the front door of Charter Oak School. At that time, we were trying to get cars off the campus of our elementary schools and so we pulled the street out. It is still on our list of streets. The easement is there for that street on that campus. And so this just removes that as we build our new school over that area that was once Parker Street.

President Slifka: Okay. Any discussion? Oh, I'm sorry. Go ahead.

Councilor Cantor: I'm reading into the record – letter from TP&Z recommending approval.

President Slifka: Okay. Anyone else? All those in favor?

All: Aye.

President Slifka: Those opposed? Motion carries. We're on to new business. #13, Mrs. Cantor.

NEW BUSINESS:

ITEM #13: ORDINANCE AMENDING ZONING APPLICATION PROCEDURES

SET FOR PUBLIC HEARING ON MAY 13, 2014 AND REFERRED TO TPZ AND CROCG.

WHEREAS recycling is an increasingly important part of everyday life; and

WHEREAS development plans of all types need to make adequate provision for both refuse collection and recycling; and

WHEREAS the Town's current zoning ordinances do not adequately require applicants to address this issue; and

WHEREAS the Town can reduce costs and increase efficiency by requiring applicants to receive formal communications regarding applications via electronic mail; and

WHEREAS the Town's current zoning ordinances also require technical amendment to parallel state zoning law

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF WEST HARTFORD THAT:

Section One. Section 177-41 of the West Hartford Code of Ordinances is hereby repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

- A. Applications made to Town Planner. All applications for required zoning permits shall be made to the Town Planner on forms provided by that office.
- B. Contents of application. An application for a zoning permit shall include the following:
- (1) At least three prints of a plot plan of the premises, drawn to scale, based upon Connecticut Geodetic Survey (CGS) datum and certified by a licensed surveyor or engineer and/or landscape architect, as appropriate under Connecticut registration regulations, showing the following:
 - (a) The actual shape and dimensions of the lot.
 - (b) The location, size and height of all existing and proposed structures.
 - (c) The existing and proposed use of all existing and proposed structures and lot areas, if other than a one- or two-family residence.
 - (d) The number of families, if any, each existing and proposed building is designed to accommodate.
 - (e) The layout of existing and proposed parking and loading facilities and access thereto, including any parking barriers or walkways.
 - (f) The type and location of any exterior lighting, including provisions for shading.
 - (g) The type, size and location of all signs.
 - (h) The type and location of any required screening or landscaping.
 - (i) [A]The location of waste disposal and recycling containers and the screening enclosures surrounding them, together with a statement of proposed method of sanitary waste disposal and recycling collection.
 - (j) Any proposed drainage facilities.
 - (2) Such additional information as required by the Town Planner or by the Plan and Zoning Commission where a special use permit or site plan approval is required, where necessary to determine that the requirements of this chapter are met. The Town Planner may excuse compliance with requirements for specific information otherwise required on the plot plan where such compliance is not necessary to determine that the requirements of this chapter are met.
 - (3) Application fees as specified in § 177-50.
 - (4) In any application where a boundary survey of the property is required, either of

the following:

- (a) One copy of the plot plan described in Subsection B(1) of this section provided on such computer medium and in such computer program or language as may be established by the Director of Community Services from time to time; or
 - (b) An application, addressed to the individual or agency which has ultimate authority to approve the underlying application, for a waiver of the requirement to produce the computerized plot plan set forth in Subsection B(4)(a) of this section, setting forth, in detail, the reason(s) why compliance with that provision is impractical, unfeasible or impossible.
- (5) The applicant shall consent to receive formal communications from the Town of West Hartford relating to the application in electronic format and shall specify an e-mail address (or addresses) to which such communications may be delivered.

Section Two: Section 177-41 of the West Hartford Code of Ordinances is hereby repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

Applications for required permits shall be reviewed and acted upon as follows:

A. Special use permit.

- (1) All special permit uses, identified as such in § 177-6B and C, are declared to possess characteristics of such unique and distinct form that each specific use shall be considered as an individual case. Special permit uses shall be deemed to be permitted uses in their respective districts, subject to the satisfaction of the requirements and standards set forth therein, in addition to all other requirements of this chapter.
- (2) The Town Planner shall refer applications for special use permits to the Planning Commission, which shall hold a public hearing [within 65 days after having received the application at a regular meeting and shall make a decision within 65 days after the public hearing]and render a decision within the time periods set forth in C.G.S. §8-7d, as that section may be amended or recodified from time to time. The Commission shall give notice prior to the date of the hearing by advertisement in a newspaper as required by state statute and by sending by mail a copy of such notice to the applicant and to the owners of all property adjoining the property which is the subject of such an application.
- (3) The applicant shall post a sign giving notice of his or her application in a conspicuous place on the property for which a special use permit approval is sought, visible from a public street. Said sign shall be posted seven days before the date of the hearing, shall remain in place until the public hearing and shall be removed not later than three days after the public hearing.

- (4) An applicant may request preliminary approval for a special use permit. In this case, the Planning Commission shall make a finding according to Subsection A(5)(a) only. The applicant shall be required to submit only such material as the Commission deems necessary to consider the application for preliminary approval. The procedure for preliminary approval shall be the same as the procedure for approval for a special use permit, except that Subsection A(6) shall not apply.
- (5) Findings of the Planning Commission.
 - (a) The Planning Commission shall make a finding that each of the following standards is met and, where necessary, shall attach specific conditions to its approval of the special use permit if, in its opinion, such conditions are essential to making the finding that:
 - [1] The location and size of the use, the nature and intensity of the operations connected with it, the size of the lot in relation to it and the location of the lot with respect to streets giving access to it are such that it will be in harmony with the appropriate and orderly development of the district in which it is located.
 - [2] The kind, location and height of all structures and the nature and extent of the landscaping on the lot are such that the use will not hinder or discourage the appropriate development and use of adjacent properties.
 - [3] The parking, [and] loading, trash and recycling facilities are adequate and properly located for the proposed use, and the entrance and exit driveways shall be laid out so as to achieve maximum safety.
 - (b) Where the applicant has requested that a special use permit be issued in connection with uses which are temporary in duration, or should the use requested be temporary in nature, the Planning Commission may take the proposed duration of the permit into consideration in determining whether the findings listed above can reasonably be made. Should the Commission vote to approve the application, it shall specifically grant any such application for the time period requested by the applicant or consistent with the nature of the use requested.
- (6) Where the Commission finds it to be necessary or appropriate to do so, it may require the submission of a suitable performance bond to assure satisfactory completion of necessary improvements.
- (7) After the approval, the applicant shall submit to the Commission three black-and-white prints and one transparent print on permanent material of the plans as

approved. The Commission shall file with the Town Planner one print of the approved plans with the approval noted thereon and a list of all conditions pertaining to the special use approval. One print of said plan and list shall be made available to the applicant.

(8) Hearing.

- (a) In approving any special use permit, the Plan and Zoning Commission shall determine a date, not later than two years after the date of its approval, by which the applicant shall be required to appear at a hearing to report upon compliance with the conditions placed by the Commission upon its approval.
- (b) At the time of that hearing, the Commission shall hear from the applicant, Town staff and the public with respect to compliance with the approval and with the conditions placed by the Commission when the permit was approved, as well as problems or concerns which have arisen as a result of the project or the approval.
- (c) This hearing shall be noticed and conducted in accord with the provisions of Subsections A(2) and A(3) of this section, the Charter of the Town of West Hartford and the laws of the State of Connecticut.
- (d) As a result of this hearing, the Commission shall determine whether or not further conditions should be imposed upon its approval in order to satisfy its obligations pursuant to Subsection A(5) of this section and, if it determines that such conditions are necessary, shall modify its approval accordingly. The Commission shall not have the power to revoke its permit as a result of this hearing but shall have the authority to direct the applicant and/or Town staff to take appropriate action to rectify any violations of its approval and conditions related thereto which are discovered during this review process.
- (e) The Commission shall not be entitled to further review of any special use permit subsequent to this process unless the use of the property or structures on it changes such that an amendment to the permit is necessary or appropriate.

B. Site plan, lot split or lot line revision approval.

- (1) The Town Planner shall review applications requiring site plan approval and applications for lot split approval or lot line revision and shall approve, disapprove or approve with modification such proposed site plan, lot split or lot line revision within 65 days after having received all of the information described in § 177-41B for the application. The petitioner or applicant may consent to one or more extensions of the 65 day period specified in this subsection, provided the

total extension period shall not be for longer than 65 days. Any proposed site plan, lot split or lot line revision not acted upon within said [sixty-five-day]65-day period, as said period may have been extended, shall be considered approved, provided that it conforms to all specific requirements of this chapter, and the Town Planner shall issue a certificate to that effect at the applicant's request.

- (2) In acting on a proposed site plan, lot split or lot line revision, the Town Planner shall determine that the requirements of this chapter are met in fact. In so doing, the Planner shall consult with the Director of Community Services on all matters regarding engineering and with any other Town official the Planner may deem necessary.
- (3) After the approval, the applicant shall submit to the Town Planner three black-and-white prints and one transparent print on permanent material of the approved site plan, lot split or lot line revision. The Town Planner shall file one print of the approved site plan, lot split or lot line revision, with the approval noted thereon. One print of said site plan shall be made available to the applicant.

C. All other permit applications.

- (1) Upon determination of the Town Planner that the proposed structure or use complies with this chapter, the Town Planner shall issue the required zoning permit. One copy of the approved plot plan shall be returned to the applicant with the approval and number of the permit noted thereon. A copy of the permit shall be displayed at the premises at all times until a certificate of occupancy has been issued. A copy of the approved plans shall be available for inspection at the premises during regular working hours.
- (2) Before the actual placement of the foundation of any structure, the contractor or owner shall stake out the location of the proposed foundation and supply the Building Inspector with a certificate by a licensed surveyor that the location of such foundation, or any part of a structure to be erected thereon, complies with the approved plot plan. Failure to supply said certificate shall automatically suspend the permit under which the work has been authorized, until said certificate has been supplied to the Building Inspector.

D. Joint hearings.

- (1) Whenever any proposed development, or group of developments within the Town of West Hartford requires review and/or decision by any combination of the Town Council, Plan and Zoning Commission, Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency and/or Zoning Board of Appeals, those agencies may hold joint hearings with respect to some or all of the applications and/or other matters before them when it appears that such joint hearings may be beneficial.
- (2) Whenever practicable, consolidated notice of the joint hearing, whether by sign,

mail or publication, shall be given; however, such notice shall be in accord with the requirements applicable to each of the applications and/or other matters to be considered. When the notice requirements applicable to the various applications in question are inconsistent such that consolidated notice is impracticable, each participating agency shall be responsible for providing separate notice of the hearing, but such notices shall identify the proceeding as a joint hearing.

- (3) The following procedures shall be applied to any joint hearings held pursuant to this subsection:
- (a) The Chairpersons of each participating agency shall determine in advance who shall chair the joint hearing.
 - (b) A quorum of the membership of each participating agency shall be required to commence the hearing and shall be required at all times during the hearing. Procedural motions regarding the conduct of the hearing shall be decided by a majority vote of all persons present and participating in the hearing. All other procedural and substantive issues shall be decided separately by each participating agency with respect to each application and/or other matter which is the subject of the joint hearing.
 - (c) An alternate member or members of any participating agency may be seated in lieu of a regular member or members thereof in accord with the procedures of that participating agency. Additional alternate members of any participating agency may participate in the hearing, at the discretion of the Chairperson of that participating agency, but such additional alternate members shall only participate in the deliberation and/or decision in the event that a seated regular or alternate member of that participating agency is unable to do so.
 - (d) Notwithstanding any other provision in this Code of Ordinances to the contrary, any agency participating in a joint hearing which is required to provide a report, recommendation, decision and/or approval to any other agency with respect to any application and/or other matter which is the subject of the joint hearing may take such action and/or provide such report, recommendation, decision or approval at any time prior to final decision by the participating agency which is to receive said report, recommendation, decision and/or approval. In the event that any participating agency is required to close its hearing, is required to complete its decision or is otherwise required to terminate any step in the approval process with respect to one or more applications and/or other matters which are included in the joint hearing process, the Chair of that agency may declare the hearing to be closed with respect to those applications and/or other matters and the joint hearing process may continue with respect to all remaining applications and/or other matters.

- (e) The most current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall be followed with respect to the procedure for the conduct of joint hearings. Where the circumstances surrounding a particular joint hearing process warrant the establishment of specific rules for the conduct of that hearing, however, the Chairs of each participating agency may agree upon such rules in advance of, or during the hearing process as the need therefor arises, in which case any such rules shall be announced upon the record of the hearing and shall be applied thereafter unless rescinded by agreement of the Chairs of the participating agencies.
- (f) Each participating agency shall meet separately to deliberate and decide the application(s) regarding which it has jurisdiction.

Councilor Cantor: I move that we refer to TPZ, CRCOG and set for public hearing on May 13th at 7:25.

Councilor Kindall: Second.

President Slifka: Motion is made and seconded. Any discussion? Seeing none, all those in favor?

All: Aye.

President Slifka: Those opposed? Motion carries. We're up to 15, Mrs. Cantor.

**ITEM #15: RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING \$4,680 IN THE FISCAL YEAR 2013-2014
GENERAL FUND BUDGET FOR THE PURCHASE OF BICYCLES FOR THE WEST
HARTFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT**

ADOPTED

WHEREAS, the West Hartford Police Department operates a Police Bicycle Squad to assist with patrol activities, and

WHEREAS, the bicycles used for patrol are in need of replacement, and

WHEREAS, the Police Bicycle Squad conducts classes on bicycle patrol and collects fees for said classes, and

WHEREAS, said funds are available for appropriation for the purchase of four (4) bicycles for patrol activities,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD authorizes the purchase of four (4) bicycles for the Police Bicycle Squad and hereby amends the fiscal year 2013-2014 budget of the General Fund as follows:

Estimated Revenues

01-220202-20401-9247	Charges for Services	\$4,680
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Appropriations

01-220202-20401-3202	Equipment	\$4,680
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Councilor Cantor: I move that we adopt.

Councilor Kindall: Second.

President Slifka: Motion is made and seconded. Mr. Van Winkle and Mr. Captain, do you care to...?

Councilor Captain: The public safety committee did discuss the bicycles that are being used by the police officers and the need to require replacement bicycle vehicles – if you want to use that word.

Mr. Van Winkle: I would just add that these funds come from a fund that – fees that the police department collect. We run a class for other towns that have bicycle officers and we show them how to do that effectively. They pay a fee to participate in that class and so the funds don't come from the taxpayer in the Town of West Hartford. It comes from the fees generated by the police department's bike class.

President Slifka: Thank you. Mr. Barnes?

Councilor Barnes: Just a follow-up to clarify. So the whole entire 4,680 is – the money's been raised through these fees?

Mr. Van Winkle: That is correct.

Councilor Barnes: Thank you.

President Slifka: Anybody else? Go ahead, Mrs. Cantor.

Councilor Cantor: Officer Harrison, right? Who just won the American Legion? Isn't he ranked the highest bike – whatever – guru of the...

Mr. Van Winkle: He's a bike maniac, yes. He's incredibly talented officer that's on the bike squad but he also is someone who is a lover of biking. So he just won the officer of the year award.

Councilor Captain: And he commutes to West Hartford on his bike which is a long commute.

President Slifka: Wow. I don't know if I'd want to ride a bike after I rode a bike all that way. My gosh. Okay. Or get on one at the end of the day after riding one – that's a tough guy. Wow. Yeah. Okay. Anything else? All those in favor?

All: Aye.

President Slifka: Those opposed? Motion carries. We're up to announcements.

ITEM #17: ANNOUNCEMENTS

I am going to skip mine in light of the hour but I don't want that to dissuade anyone else with something important to announce. Okay. Oh, Mrs. Cantor, don't be dissuaded.

Councilor Cantor: Happy Easter and Passover.

President Slifka: Now I feel bad but thank you for taking care of that. Okay. Report from corporation counsel. Mr. O'Brien?

ITEM #18: REPORTS OF CORPORATION COUNSEL

Mr. O'Brien: We don't need executive session fortunately and I'll be happy to answer any questions you might have.

President Slifka: Thank you. Are there any questions for Mr. O'Brien? No, okay. Thank you, Joe.

ITEM #19: APPOINTMENTS

Are there any appointments tonight? I don't believe so. No? Okay. No need for executive session. We're moving along. Consent calendar, #26.

ITEM #26: CONSENT CALENDAR

ADOPTED

ITEM #14: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO SUBMIT A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, THROUGH THE ELDERLY AND DISABLED DEMAND RESPONSIVE TRANSPORTATION EXPANDED PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the Town of West Hartford desires to continue its provision of expanded Dial-A-Ride transportation services to those West Hartford residents who are elderly or who have a disability; and

WHEREAS, the State of Connecticut, Department of Transportation provides grant funding to municipalities to operate an Elderly and Disabled Demand Responsive Transportation Expanded Program; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council wishes to submit an application for that grant for Fiscal Year 2014 - 2015;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WEST HARTFORD TOWN COUNCIL that the Town Manager is hereby authorized to submit an application to the State of Connecticut, Department of Transportation, for a grant for Fiscal Year 2014 -2015 in order to secure funding for an Elderly and Disabled Demand Responsive Transportation Expanded Program to be operated in West Hartford

ITEM #16: RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING FEES RECEIVED FROM THE 2013 CT SWAT CHALLENGE TO THE POLICE DEPARTMENT'S FISCAL YEAR 2013-2014 GENERAL FUND BUDGET

WHEREAS, the West Hartford Police Department's SWAT Team conducted the 2013 CT SWAT Challenge in August 2013, and

WHEREAS, the Town collected \$103,970.54 in fees, which were deposited into a subsidiary fund, and

WHEREAS, the West Hartford Police Department requests that these funds be used to offset the expenses incurred to host the 2013 CT SWAT Challenge,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD, that the fiscal year 2013-2014 General Fund budget be amended as follows:

Increase Estimated Revenues

01-220405-20402-9298	Special Events-SWAT Challenge	\$103,970.54
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Increase Appropriations

01-220405-20402-2004	SWAT Challenge Expenditures	\$103,970.54
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ITEM #21: MINUTES FROM COMMUNITY PLANNING AND PHYSICAL SERVICES COMMITTEE 3/25/14

ITEM #22: MINUTES FROM FINANCE AND BUDGET COMMITTEE 3/18/14 AND 3/25/14

ITEM #23: MINUTES FROM HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE 3/18/14

ITEM #24: MINUTES FROM PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE 3/21/14

**ITEM #25: MINUTES FROM WEST HARTFORD CENTER SPECIAL SERVICES
DISTRICT 3/25/14**

Councilor Cantor: I move that we adopt.

Councilor Kindall: Second.

President Slifka: All those in favor?

All: Aye.

President Slifka: Those opposed? Motion carries.

ITEM #s 27 and 28: COMMUNICATIONS and PETITIONS

President Slifka: There are no communications, no petitions.

ITEM #29: ADJOURNMENT

President Slifka: So I'd like to entertain a motion to adjourn.

Councilor Cantor: So moved.

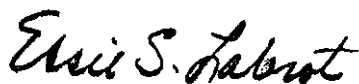
Councilor Kindall: Second.

President Slifka: All those in favor?

All: Aye.

President Slifka: Those opposed? Motion carries. We're adjourned. Goodnight.

Meeting Adjourned at 10:39 p.m.



Essie S. Labrot
Town Clerk/Council Clerk

ESL/kc

APPROVED AT MAY 13, 2014, TOWN COUNCIL MEETING